

TO
A
GANDHIAN
CAPITALIST

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN
MAHATMA GANDHI AND JAMNALAL BAJAJ

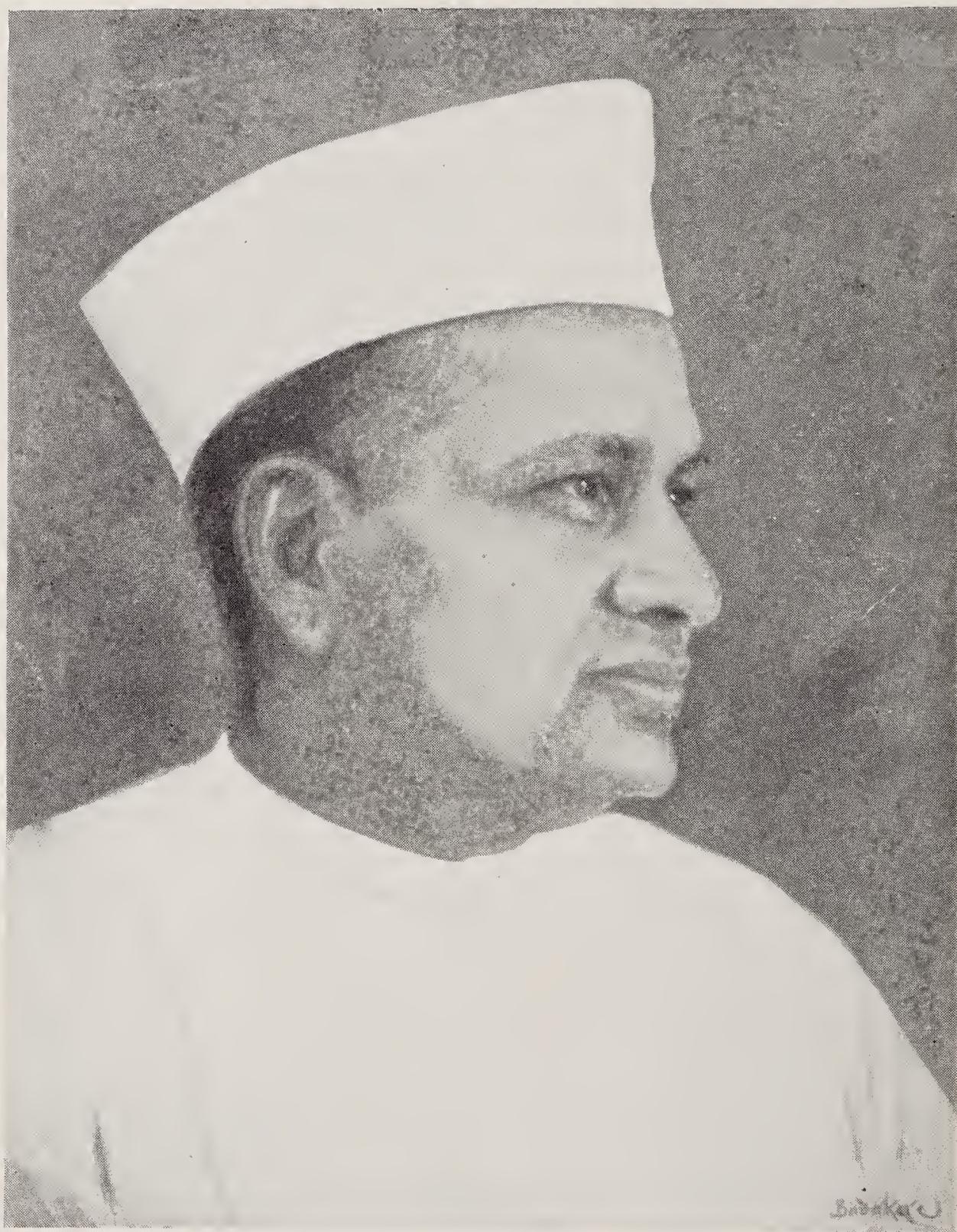
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TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST



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JAMNALAL BAJAJ, 1889-1942

TO
A GANDHIAN
CAPITALIST

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN
MAHATMA GANDHI AND JAMNALAL BAJAJ
AND MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY

Edited by
KAKA KALELKAR

Foreword by
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAK PRAKASHAN BOMBAY

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO THE FIRST EDITION*

This selection from the correspondence that passed between Mahatma Gandhi and Jamnalal Bajaj is brought out in the hope that it will be of interest to the English reading public. The original letters were mostly written either in Gujarati or Hindi, and the entire correspondence is being published in a separate volume.**

We are thankful to the Navajivan Trust for permission to publish Gandhiji's letters.

An unusual circumstance might be recorded here with regard to the correspondence. The files containing these letters wedged in between other files were packed in a wooden box and stowed away in Wardha while Jamnalalji was busy with the Jaipur Satyagraha campaign. Curiously enough, when the box was opened years later, after Jamnalalji's death, it was found that all the files were eaten away by white ants, while the five files containing the correspondence were spared. Perhaps this was because Gandhiji's letters, being mostly written on small pieces of paper, occupied the centre of the files, and were, therefore, less exposed to attack. Or, maybe, the special qualities of durability and thickness that make handmade paper (on which most of these letters are written) resistant to the ravages of time, also make it comparatively safer against the depredations of white ants!

* Published in 1951.

** All the available letters in their original form have been published in 1953 in a volume entitled *Pachwe Putrako Bapu Ke Ashirvad*.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of *To A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST* published in 1951 has been out of print for sometime now. Although Gandhiji wrote these letters to the members of a single family, the contents of these letters have a universal appeal, conveying as they do Gandhiji's thoughts and observations on a number of issues confronting people every day in their lives. In this sense they have a permanent relevance like all of Gandhiji's writings and hence it is felt that the present generation would welcome this new enlarged edition.

The present edition contains about fifty additional letters selected from among those which were found after the First Edition was published. These are included as they throw further light on the relations which subsisted between Gandhiji and his 'fifth son'.

Foreword

The year 1919 saw the beginnings of a new epoch in India's long history. Gandhiji was a well-known figure in India, and even to some extent abroad, before that year. But in 1919 he came on this vast scene of India as a blazing star gathering round himself not only the homage of the multitude, but also the devotion of a curious assemblage of human beings.

We were an odd assortment, very different from each other; different in our backgrounds, ways of life and ways of thinking, but there must have been some common feature in us to attract us towards that amazing personality.

Among those who came to Gandhiji then and became one of the select who were intimate with him, was Jamnalal Bajaj. I think I met him first at the Congress Session of 1920. In the common companionship of those who were associated with the national movement under Gandhiji's leadership, we met often and grew to know each other fairly intimately. We were very different from one another and it is possible that, in other circumstances, there might have been no occasion for that intimacy to grow. But I suppose, we recognised some worth in each other and the bond of mutual respect and affection grew progressively stronger. Certainly my respect for him became great and my affection for him made me look upon him almost as a member of an intimate family circle. In spite of our different ways of thinking, I went to him often for his advice in personal as well as public matters, because I realised that he was a man of integrity of purpose and sound common sense.

And so we both grew in the service of a common cause, with a leader to whom both of us looked up to, from our different view

points, as a great and magnificent personality. The great movement which we served had innumerable facets and all kinds of people were drawn to it. There were the great masses of Indian humanity; there were intellectuals and socialists, the zamindars and the tenants, the industrialists and the workers, the merchants and the artisans—a remarkable assortment. All of us contributed in small or great measure to that all-embracing movement. I think it would be true to say that Jamnalalji brought to it a special and rare quality. Most of us were like others and could perhaps be spared, for others could take their place. But Jamnalalji was rather unique in his own way, for many of his kind did not come into the movement with that devotion which he brought to it, and so we valued him all the more and his absolute integrity and honesty of purpose endeared him to us.

It was a great blow to all of us when he left us in the prime of life. There was no one to take his place. I am glad that this collection of letters is being published, because it brings out somewhat what Jamnalalji was and it gives us some insight also into one of the innumerable aspects of Gandhiji's life and activities.

PAHALGAM
(KASHMIR)
26th June 1951 }

Jawaharlal Nehru

In Search of a Guru

Even from an early age I had a vague feeling in me that my life should be simple, purposeful, progressive and of service to others. It was in pursuit of this ideal that I started taking interest in social, governmental, business and political fields. Although my efforts met with some success I always had a feeling that it was necessary to have a proper guide if I were to fully realise my aims in life. Even when I was engaged in my various activities I continued my search for such a guide. In the course of this search I found Gandhiji, and that for ever.

* * *

Earlier during my search I had established contacts with several personalities in the country. I had come to know more or less intimately the high-souled Malaviyaji, the great poet Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose, Lokamanya Tilak and many others and remained in touch with them. I observed carefully the life and activities of these great men. All this while one thought was uppermost in my mind, namely the saying of Saint Tukaram: "*Bole Taisa Chale, Tyachi vandavi Paule* (Bow down at his feet whose actions are in consonance with his preachings)". After coming to know many leaders I observed that most of them did not come up to this ideal to the extent I wished. I was certainly influenced by the many good qualities of these various personalities and my devotion and respect for them continued undiminished. But I was not able to regard any of them as my guide in life.

* * *

While I was in search of a guide, Gandhiji was engaged in serving the people in South Africa. I used to read carefully the

news about him that appeared in the newspapers, and I had an instinctive feeling that if this personage came to India I should make an effort to meet him. From 1907 to 1915, I had been engaged in this search of mine. When, therefore, after returning to India, Gandhiji set up a small Ashram in a hired bungalow at Kochhrab in Ahmedabad, I went there thrice in order to get acquainted with him. I carefully observed his way of life. At that time he used to wear a shirt, dhoti and Kathiawadi pugree. He used to walk barefoot. He would personally devote some time to the work of grinding corn, and cooking and serving meals. His food consisted of plantains, groundnuts, olive oil and lemons. Prayers were held morning and evening at the Ashram. I used to join in the evening prayers. Gandhiji himself used to give discourses on the *Ramayana*, *Gita*, etc. I also saw his hospitality to the guests and how he nursed the sick and attended to the minutest details of the needs of the Ashram and its inmates. I also saw Ba totally involved in the activities of the Ashram. Gandhiji also started making enquiries about me. Gradually our contact grew and we were drawn closer to each other. The more I examined his way of life with the sharp eye of a critic, the more I felt that his words and actions were in unison, and that he fulfilled my ideal of "Bole Taise Chale". Thus we became more and more close to each other.

* * *

I began identifying myself more and more with Gandhiji's work. He became not only my guide in life, but like unto my father. I became his fifth son.

* * *

It is now more than 24 years that I have been with Mahatmaji. During these years I have closely observed all aspects of his life. I have toured in his company, participated in his Ashram life, stayed close to him during his fasts, and assisted in his treatment during his illnesses. I have been witness to his many discussions and deliberations and have shared the burden of his public work to the best of my capacity. His many good qualities in all situations have progressively impressed and influenced me

more and more. My faith in him has gone on increasing. I went on surrendering myself to him more and more. Today he is my ideal and his orders govern my life. His affection is my very life.

Mahatmaji has many superhuman qualities. But I can say this much without fear of contradiction, that he is a reservoir of the best of human virtues. Of the human virtues he is indeed the Himalayas. His punctuality and orderliness, his scrupulous care of public funds, nursing of the sick, hospitality to guests, his fairness towards his opponents, sense of humour, charm, cleanliness, keen eye for details, and firmness have over the years revealed themselves to me. I have also seen some contradictory traits in him. His unshakable firmness and harshness are based on his boundless love and tenderness. His miserliness for every pie is fed by the waters of his great generosity, and his simplicity is nurtured on his sense of beauty.

* * *

If my feelings for Mahatmaji were restricted to only respect for him, I could have written something special about him. But he has regarded me so much as his own that I think of him only as my father and preceptor.

* * *

Mahatmaji completely revolutionised the very foundations of my thinking. Many a time I used to think of renunciation. He showed me the way to direct my thoughts to fruitful channels. My mind was drawn closer and closer to him on seeing his purity of character, cool fulgence, compassion for the poor, his emphasis on truth in human dealings, peerless love, and his faith in Dharma. I began to realise my shortcomings and the ambition to become worthy of his affection in this life went on growing in me.

* * *

If anyone in India has achieved complete identity with the poor, it is Mahatmaji. He is the very embodiment of compassion. He is always mindful that while removing the disabilities of the poor, no injustice is done to the rich and it should not give rise to the least degree of enmity between the different

classes. It is because of this that people belonging to all religions, sects and classes in India look upon him as their own. It is as though there is a confluence of *Chatur varna* in him. If we, the people of India become worthy of the boundless love which he has for the mother country, our country will certainly rise to great heights.

Any person who has lived with Mahatmaji or has made an effort to understand his teaching will never lose hope. Such a person will always do his duty with enthusiasm. May be there will be some delay in attaining Swaraj—but I am sure that any person who continues to do his duty along the lines laid down by him, will certainly at least achieve his own upliftment, that is, attain freedom for himself.

* * *

As I was aware of my own frailties, I did not regard Bapu as my 'Guru' nor accept him as such; I have certainly accepted him as my 'father'. This I did in the belief that by regarding him as my father I would be able to overcome my shortcomings.

* * *

In this world Bapu can give me the love of a father and Vinoba that of a Guru, if only I could make myself worthy of it.

* * *

I shall consider myself blessed the day on which I become worthy of Mahatmaji's paternal love.

J A M N A L A L B A J A J

Jamnalalji as I knew Him

It has been indeed a great pleasure and privilege to me to have been invited to edit this volume of correspondence between Gandhiji on the one hand, and his 'spiritual son', Jamnalalji, and some members of his family, on the other. Were it not for the assistance of kind friends who helped me in this work, it would not have been possible to complete it within a reasonable time, since practically all the letters included in this volume had to be translated from the original Hindi or Gujarati. Shri Chandrasankar Shukla translated most of the letters that passed between Gandhiji and Jamnalalji. The preparation of the biographical Introduction and the translation of the rest of the letters were done by Shri U.S. Mohan Rao. Shri R. K. Prabhu provided valuable biographical material about Jamnalalji. I must thank these friends for lessening my burden to a very great extent.

Some friends have demurred to the title of the book—*To A Gandhian Capitalist*. They ill relish the use of the word 'Capitalist' to describe a practical idealist like Jamnalalji. "The word 'Capitalist' in these days carries with it an odium which even the powerful adjective 'Gandhian' cannot mitigate", they say. But in spite of their friendly protests I have retained the title because Bapu always thought and cited Jamnalalji as one coming very near to his ideal of trusteeship. Jamnalalji did earn money like other capitalists but he held himself as a trustee of his wealth and he expected his sons and heirs to do the same.

Jamnalalji would have gladly given up further earning of money after he had surrendered himself to Gandhiji, but Gandhiji encouraged him to earn more, because he knew that Jamnalalji's ways were honest and clean and the money so earned was spent in the service of the country. Although Jamnalalji spent most

of his time in public activities he did not completely neglect his business—only, he was not enamoured of piling up riches.

About the theory of trusteeship Gandhiji wrote: "It is no make-shift, certainly no camouflage. I am confident that it will survive all other theories. No other theory is compatible with non-violence. It has the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it. That possessors of wealth have not acted up to the theory, does not prove its falsity; it proves the weakness of the wealthy." Jamnalalji showed that a capitalist, if he has the spiritual urge, can overcome this weakness. He thus became a capitalist of the Gandhian pattern.

My first acquaintance with Jamnalalji at the time of the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress in 1920 was rather casual. It was only later when he began to visit us frequently at the Sabarmati Ashram that I came to know more of him, and with the passing of years our friendship and intimacy grew.

Jamnalalji was, perhaps, second only to Gandhiji in baffling both his critics and admirers alike, by combining in himself the best of apparent contraries. He was, on the one hand, a typical product of Hindu society having always kept rooted to the soil from which he sprang, and, on the other, a bold reformer who brought new orientation to the age-old social system. While he was proud of the ancient heritage of Hinduism, he was one of the first to see the injustices heaped upon the Harijans in the name of religion and to throw himself heart and soul into the movement for their uplift. He was a rich man who voluntarily embraced simple living, and, owning palatial houses, preferred to live in huts. Although he had no formal education and delighted in calling himself 'an ignorant Jat', he recognised the importance of education by lavishly spending money for the education of others, especially the children of public workers who had dedicated themselves to poverty for the service of the nation. Few people know that one of the earliest donations of this man, who knew no science, was towards the establishment of a research laboratory of the celebrated Indian biologist, Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose!

When young Jamnalal completely surrendered himself to Gandhiji and dedicated his services to the national cause, he was unaware that the makings of a true Satyagrahi were inherent in him. Gandhiji recognised in an instant that it was an ardent and aspiring soul who was offering himself as his 'fifth son', and, as he often used to say afterwards, all that he had to do was to awaken Jamnalalji to the potentialities of his character by helping him to understand the spirituality and universality of the principle of Satyagraha. It is no wonder, therefore, that Gandhiji accepted the offer in all seriousness, and interested himself in the minutest details of the life and welfare of Jamnalalji and his family.

Jamnalalji's generosity is remembered by many grateful institutions throughout the length and breadth of India. Judicious in the extreme, but limitless in its extent, his generosity set new moral standards to donors in his own community who took a leaf out of his life.

His donations to public institutions were not made in any spirit of patronage. He used to say that the thought that public workers had dedicated their whole lives in the service of humanity always produced a compelling urge in him, under which the least he could do was to contribute his share in the building up of the institutions, whose true foundations, nevertheless, were the selfless services of these workers.

Generosity, however, was not the only point in Jamnalalji's greatness. He was highly respected as an adviser by innumerable institutions; and public workers rushed to him whenever they found themselves in difficulties which were not necessarily financial. For, Jamnalalji combined in himself the high idealism awakened in him by his *Guru* and the shrewd common-sense inborn in him. I myself never went to Jamnalalji for money, except once when I wanted Rs. 100 to defray the expenses of a student. But there were several occasions when I went to him for advice regarding the running of institutions and on public matters, and invariably I found his advice to be shrewd and sound.

The judicious care with which Jamnalalji expended the

public funds entrusted to him is well illustrated by an incident which occurred early in our acquaintance. A Sindhi gentleman whom I had known for some time as a good and sincere man pressed me to endorse an appeal for financial help to some scheme of public work which he had prepared. I did this without carefully studying the merits of the scheme. When the application was presented to the Congress Working Committee, Jamnalalji doubted the soundness of the scheme, and was rather surprised that I should have supported it. He quietly came out of the meeting and asked me if I had assured myself that the cause deserved help before supporting it. "Can you stand guarantee that the money given to him will not be wasted?" he asked me bluntly. I replied that I knew that the man who had sponsored it was good and trustworthy, and that was why I had endorsed the appeal. Jamnalalji thereupon pointed out to me that in such cases it was imperative not only to verify the credentials of the sponsors, but also to examine the practicability of their schemes, because not a single pie out of public funds could afford to be wasted.

I was, after all, a teacher, and men belonging to my profession do not at all claim to possess businesslike qualities. But I know that even Gandhiji, the born 'bania', who took care of every pie spent out of public funds, sometimes came in for criticism at Jamnalalji's hands.

Jamnalalji's natural frankness and humility were such that at times even his opponents were perplexed. On one occasion, the opposite side in a defamation case, while cross-examining Jamnalalji asked a pointed question whether he himself wrote his speeches and addresses. "No", said Jamnalalji, "I am no scholar. I asked friends to help me to put my ideas into shape. The ideas are no less mine although they are clothed in words by others."

Hospitality is not a rare virtue in India. Its fragrance has permeated the entire Indian social fabric through the ages. With Jamnalalji, however, hospitality was not merely a social duty or a point of family honour; it was the outward expression of an inner urge which emanated from his feeling of oneness with all,

and knew no barriers. He always went out of his way to befriend people of other communities with a passion which could be compared only to Gandhiji's. The nobility and understanding with which he put up with the weaknesses and foibles of others lent a charm to his character and manners which endeared him to all.

I well remember an occasion when a friend told Jamnalalji in the presence of others that a certain person who used to be an occasional guest at his house was not a very desirable person. Jamnalalji did not relish the remark. Later on he told that friend privately : "You must realise that you have added to my burden by passing that remark in the presence of my servants. In future, I shall have to take extra care to see that the servants do not slight that guest, now that they have heard your remark about him."

His transparent sincerity would tolerate no back-biters or slanderers. He told me once that early in life he had made a vital discovery that friendship could never endure secrecy or even mental reservations. He had, therefore, made it a rule of his life to discuss things frankly with friends even at the risk of hurting them. And the characteristic feature of Jamnalalji's approach to his friends was that his frankness never left any scars behind.

Jamnalalji's solicitude and abundant love for his friends sometimes made him unmindful even of grave personal risks. Once when I was staying in the Harijan hostel at Wardha I had an attack of cholera. As soon as Jamnalalji heard about my illness he rushed to see me and expressed his deep concern over my condition. He insisted that I should allow myself to be shifted to his residence so that he could take proper care of me. I protested against this and reminded him that cholera was a highly contagious disease, and, whatever be his love and regard for me, he must not forget that he was a householder and that he had no right to endanger the lives of his wife and children and the guests in his house by shifting me there. There was a limit to one's generosity. He saw the wisdom of my arguments and kept mum. But it was only after I had assured him that every care

was being taken of me that he consented to leave me where I was.

Having come from a society in which women were denied even ordinary rights of fair treatment, Jamnalalji made it his life's mission to provide education for women. The Girls' School at Wardha which later developed into a full-fledged Mahila Ashram was started by him with the specific object of providing an ideal education to women and particularly to daughters of public workers. I am reminded here of a committee meeting in the early days of the Mahila Ashram at which Gandhiji recommended the drastic step of closing down the institution because suitable teachers were not available. At the very suggestion, Jamnalalji burst into tears saying: "What are all my resources worth if, after so much effort in building up an institution I am unable to provide education to daughters of workers who have dedicated their lives in the service of humanity?" Gandhiji was visibly moved by Jamnalalji's agony and the question of winding up the institution was dropped.

Among Gandhiji's associates there was perhaps none else who so completely identified himself with him in every branch of his activities as Jamnalalji. Jamnalalji's contribution in any one field of work—political, social or constructive—would have been enough to ensure for him a permanent place in the history of our freedom movement. I do not wish to dwell upon these aspects of his life here, as the reader will find them dealt with in the biographical Introduction. To my mind the most significant aspect of his life was his spiritual endeavour. As not much is known to the outside world about this aspect, I wish to deal with it here.

Jamnalalji was a *sadhaka*, a spiritual aspirant, and, early in life, long before he met Gandhiji, he had started on the quest for a Guru for the fulfilment of his aspirations. When he met Gandhiji he knew that his quest had ended, and so he completely surrendered himself to his spiritual father. Under Gandhiji's guidance he started his experiments in self-purification which continued throughout his lifetime. It was during the closing months of his life that he reached a spiritual crisis, which culminated in a befitting and noble end to a life well-spent in

the service of humanity.

Cow protection—*Go-raksha* as it was called—was an important plank in Gandhiji's constructive programme since the entire village economy of our country revolves on the cow. It was Jamnalalji who had pointed out that the word *Go-raksha* smacked of patronage and also a spirit of antagonism to those who kill the cow, and suggested the modest name *Go-sevā*—service of the cow—in its stead. Gandhiji had at once accepted this suggestion.

In spite of the importance of this work, I was rather surprised when Jamnalalji came to me one day, towards the end of his life, and told me that he had decided in consultation with Gandhiji to devote himself entirely to the service of the cow. I told him frankly that I did not think his choice was happy. There were other more important fields of work where his guidance and drive were urgently needed. “The constructive work which you alone can tackle best is Harijan Seva or better still *asprishyata nivarana*”*, I explained. “What Thakkar Bapa and Birlaji are doing is relief work; at best it is work for the uplift and betterment of the lot of the Harijans. This is certainly very necessary. But the real work consists in carrying conviction to the orthodox members of the community that untouchability is a sin and a diabolical injustice supported by religious sanctions. You alone could take the *savarnas*** by storm as you did in the beginning on behalf of the Congress.”

Jamnalalji seemed to agree with me, but simply said: “Why not speak about it to Bapu himself?”

I went to Bapu immediately and placed my views before him. After hearing me, Bapu said: “Do you think I could not have thought of that? I agree with you entirely. But of late Jamnalal has become more and more introspective, and is always thinking of self-purification. He wants to take up some work that will be consistent with his plan of self-purification and spiritual growth. That is why I specially chose *Go-seva* work for him as best suited to his present mood. In this work he will not have

* Removal of untouchability

** Upper classes

to come in contact with men and their affairs and so he will have better opportunities for introspection."

Earlier, Jamnalalji had shifted from his palatial house in Wardha to an ordinary bungalow to lead a life of simplicity. Now he got a simple, crude thatched hut built for himself at a cost of about Rs. 250. Its floor was unpaved, hard and uneven. It was bare of all furniture except for a low rough cot for sitting and sleeping. There he went and stayed in the midst of dumb-driven cattle, leading a life of hardship and austerity and spending all his time in contemplation and service of the cow. He was quite happy and contented in the midst of these surroundings when I visited him there. A few months later he suddenly passed away.

Letters addressed to or written by a person like Jamnalalji should always be interesting. The letters that are collected here are valuable historical records and at the same time highly spiritual documents which concern two very remarkable and noble lives. Let the readers rejoice at the opportunity of sharing this spiritual intercourse between the greatest man since Buddha and Christ, and a worthy disciple who strove throughout his life to reach the ideals of his Master.

The correspondence that we are privileged to read here also presents one little-known aspect of Gandhiji's constructive work and may be regarded as a sample of what Gandhiji did to influence and mould thousands of families throughout India. Indeed, one cannot say that Gandhiji's moral contribution through this department of his activities was in any way less important. It was perhaps the highest and best constructive work which Gandhiji undertook, leaving a spiritual legacy behind.

WARDHA

KAKA KALELKAR

8th March, 1951

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Introduction

Writing about the ‘remarkable assortment’ of talented and devoted individuals who gathered around Gandhiji and who dedicated their lives and destinies to the great movement led by him, Jawaharlal Nehru recalls: “All of us contributed in small or great measure to the all-embracing movement, (but) Jamnalalji brought to it a special and rare quality.”

What is this ‘special and rare quality’ in Jamnalal Bajaj—essentially a successful businessman and a person without the visible brilliance and flamboyance of some other leaders of the time—that made him a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, and a leading light among the political and constructive workers who dominated the Indian scene during the three fateful decades of the Gandhian era? This biographical introduction has tried to bring out some of these rare qualities which made him unique among Gandhiji’s followers and endeared him to one and all who came in contact with him.

There was something instinctive and spontaneous in the attraction that Gandhiji and Jamnalal Bajaj exercised on each other. Gandhiji saw in him the perfect embodiment of the noble ‘man of the world’. Jamnalal Bajaj too found in Gandhiji the ideal Guru of his conception. But more than that, Jamnalalji had in him certain qualities of Gandhiji’s own complex personality. It was not surprising, therefore, that Jamnalalji became Gandhiji’s ‘fifth son’.

The manner in which Gandhiji influenced the character and course of life of Jamnalal Bajaj, and the beauty and the intensity of their relationship, come out vividly in this compilation of letters exchanged between them during the twenty-five years

of this remarkable association.

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*

Jamnalal Bajaj was not born to wealth. But, early in life, he inherited a fortune left to him by the rich merchant who had adopted him as his grandson. He was born in a poor family in a waterless village, Kashi-ka-Bas, in the old Jaipur State, on November 4, 1889. He was only five when he became, through a miraculous chain of events, the grandson and heir, by adoption, to Bachhraj Bajaj, a businessman and philanthropist from Sikar, a principality in Jaipur State, who had settled in Wardha.

Bachhrajji had an adopted son, Ramdhandas, who had died issueless soon after marriage. In the year 1894, Bachhrajji and his wife Sadibai visited their ancestral village Kashi-ka-Bas, expressly in search of a suitable child from their own community for adoption by their widowed daughter-in-law. Near the village temple one day, Sadibai saw the five-year-old Jamnalal playing. The child looked handsome and intelligent. And as it turned out, she knew the child's mother, Birdibai. Sadibai told her friend about her grief at being childless. To console her, Birdibai said, "Why worry? Regard Jaman as your own."

The couple took it for granted that their search had come to an end. Before leaving for Wardha, Sadibai made a formal request to Birdibai for taking the child in adoption. Birdibai was completely taken by surprise. Jamnalal was her favourite son and she could not think of parting with him. She naturally demurred. It was then that Sadibai reminded her of her words, and Birdibai realised her mistake. When Kaniramji, the boy's father, came to know of it all, he conferred with his elder brother Parasharamji who was not at all in favour of the proposal. But Bachhrajji and Sadibai insisted that Birdibai had made a promise and she could not go back on it. In the end Kaniramji yielded and told Birdibai: "You have to honour your word even if it was given unwittingly and only in innocent sympathy. The pledged word is more valuable than the son."

The grateful Bachhrajji wished to make a gift of money to Kaniramji. But Kaniramji politely, but firmly, declined the offer. He reminded Bachhrajji that he was getting the child

only on the strength of a promise unwittingly made. After a great deal of persuasion, in which the elders of the village joined, Kaniramji made the concession that Bachhrajji could give a donation for sinking a well for the common use of the people of the village to relieve them of the chronic scarcity of water. That well stands to this day as a monument to the memory of a man of his word.

At the age of six, Jamnalal started going to a Marathi school in Wardha. Four years later, Bachhrajji stopped his formal schooling, and took him in his shop to train him in the family business.

Jamnalal was betrothed to Jankidevi when he was only ten years old. Jankidevi was six. Three years later their marriage was solemnised at Wardha with the pomp and ceremony associated with an affluent family.

Even as a boy of thirteen, Jamnalal had begun to take interest in reading newspapers. He became an ardent admirer of Lokamanya Tilak. In 1906, when there was a proposal to publish from Nagpur a Hindi edition of Lokamanya's Marathi *Kesari*, Jamnalal sent a hundred rupees as his contribution. His grandfather had fixed an allowance of one rupee a day for him as an incentive to learn his trade with care and diligence. The boy had cultivated the habit of thrift and saved his allowance. And it was from his personal savings, that he made this donation. He used to recall in later years that this humble gift of a hundred rupees had given him greater satisfaction than the donations of lakhs he made subsequently to other causes.

Bachhrajji, though a kindly man at heart, was of a somewhat irate and imperious nature. Once, in a moment of anger, he reminded Jamnalal, then 17, that he had come into possession of riches without having laboured for them. Jamnalal was deeply hurt. He felt he could not put up with such an insult even from his own grandfather. He decided to renounce his claim to the inheritance, and wrote a touching letter to his grandfather to that effect. The letter is a fine example of the strength, sensitiveness and nobility of Jamnalal's mind and character. It was written in Marwadi, and is reproduced below in

Mahadev Desai's English rendering:

"You were so angry with me today. It was God's will, and you had a right to be angry in that you have adopted me. It is not your fault. Rather, it is the fault of those who gave me in adoption. The money is yours, and you may do whatever you like with it. I am sorry for the expenses you have incurred on me so far, but from this moment I will not touch a pie out of your money. I have no right against you and I would implore you not to be anxious about me. May God keep you for many more years. Wherever I go I shall pray for your welfare. Do pardon me for having irritated you. I am sure you never believed that I served you because of your money. Please dismiss that thought from your mind, if you ever had it. I care not for wealth. I pray that I may never forget the name of God who alone can keep me happy in this and in the next life. I beseech you, be of good cheer and do not sorrow over my going. All earthly relationships are hollow. The worldly possessions hold you in their grip. Thank God you have freed me today from their deadly grip. And please rest assured that I will not go to law to claim a pie of what is yours. This is a regular release-deed on a stamped paper and it declares that you owe me no obligation whatever. I owe no debts that you need repay. Use your money in charity, swear not at Sadhus and others, as is your wont, but please them with whatever money you can give. I am taking nothing but the clothes that cover me."¹

Bachhrajji was deeply moved by this letter, and was penitent. He followed Jamnalal to the railway station. With tears in his eyes, he persuaded the boy not to leave him. A month later Bachhrajji passed away, leaving Jamnalal heir to all his wealth.

Jamnalalji with his characteristic zeal spent the next few years in expanding his business activities. But he was not an ordinary businessman. He maintained integrity in the conduct of all his affairs, and never compromised his principles, even though it sometimes meant considerable sacrifice. He soon gained the respect of all those with whom he came in contact. Within a decade, while he was still in his twenties, he had made a name for himself

¹ *Harijan* 22-2-1942.

in the highest business circles of the country.

* * *

At a very early age, fired by a sense of patriotism and a zeal to serve his fellowmen, Jamnalalji established contacts with leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Lokamanya Tilak, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Rabindranath Tagore. He sought and found light and strength from these early contacts. They too were impressed by the young man's sincerity and selflessness. Jagdish Chandra Bose, who became his friend, saw in Jamnalalji "one who would serve his country to the utmost". But the seeker in Jamnalalji was restless, unconsoled by wealth and success, looking for a deeper meaning and higher aim in life, and searching for a guide and guru who could satisfy this yearning.

Jamnalalji had read about Gandhiji's activities in South Africa and had been deeply impressed. He, therefore, decided that he must meet Gandhiji whenever he came to India. When Gandhiji returned to India in 1915 and set up an Ashram at Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, he paid several visits to the Ashram and carefully observed Gandhiji in his daily life. The manner in which Gandhiji organised the activities of the Ashram with a strict code of discipline and himself participated in the daily chores, the loving and probing supervision that he exercised over the institution attending to the needs of everyone with minute care, profoundly impressed him. He had all along been inspired by the dictum of Saint Tukaram: "Bow down to him whose actions are in accordance with his utterances." And Gandhiji was just such a man. Jamnalalji, therefore, felt that at last his search for a guide had found fulfilment.

Gandhiji, too, was instinctively drawn to this young man, who had started helping his activities in many ways. As early as 1917, Gandhiji wrote to him: "Your affection overwhelms me. I only pray to God to make me worthy of this abundance of love. I hope your devotion will always advance you on the path of righteousness."¹ During the next three years, their relationship became closer and closer.

Jamnalalji was chosen as Chairman of the Reception Com-

¹ Letter No. 5 in the text

mittee of the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress held in 1920. He was just thirty-one years old. He felt unequal to the great responsibility that he was asked to shoulder, but finally accepted it at Gandhiji's behest.

One day during the session he came to Gandhiji and said with some hesitation: "I want to ask something of you." Gandhiji, who had come to know him closely by then put him at ease by saying: "Ask and it shall be given, if it is at all within my power to give." "Regard me like your son Devdas," said Jamnalalji. Gandhiji was momentarily taken aback at this strange request, but after a slight pause he replied: "Agreed. Only, I am giving nothing, you are the giver." Later Gandhiji told Mahadev Desai: "I am astonished at Jamnalal's humility. He came to me asking me to treat him like Devdas, to regard him as my fifth son, to command him and to correct him." Recalling this incident, Mahadev Desai observed: "The humility had its effect. Jamnalal (Bajaj) became Jamnalal Gandhi. Ever since, Jamnalalji has hitched his wagon to the star, asked at every step in life: 'What would Bapu wish me to do in these circumstances?' and has acted according to the answer given by the Dweller in the Innermost."¹

Significantly enough, this personal act of surrender of Jamnalalji coincided with the Nagpur session of the Congress at which the supreme leadership of the organisation was vested in Gandhiji. This was the beginning of a new era in the history of the country when the Congress embarked on a programme of direct action to achieve the country's independence from British rule. The three decades that followed were the most momentous period in India's fight for freedom, waged with the new weapons forged by Gandhiji: Non-violent mass action on the one hand and the Constructive Programme on the other. With Gandhiji at the helm, Jamnalalji was naturally drawn into the freedom movement in which he participated wholeheartedly. For the next twenty-two years — till death prematurely snatched him away at the age of 52 in 1942—he placed his all—person, wealth and family — fully at the disposal of the Master. Refer-

¹ *Young India*, 28-6-1923

ring to Jamnalalji's devotion, Gandhiji said later: "It was an easy thing for me to rely on him to carry out my wishes, for no one had identified himself so much with every one of my activities as he."¹

Jamnalalji's dedication to Gandhiji was a simple act of faith, and his devotion had the purity and intensity of the total surrender of *sadhaka* to his guru. As he observed: "No one who had had the good fortune of being Gandhiji's associate and has made an effort to understand his approach to men and affairs and attitude towards life will ever get tired of life. He will be filled with an enthusiasm to work and a zest for life... This is my faith..... Bapu is my ideal, my guiding star and my esteemed father whose command I implicitly obey. His affection is my life." "I believe Jamnalalji has not only fully understood the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi but has accepted them for himself and regulated his everyday mode of life in accordance with them," said Rajendra Prasad. "Though not much endowed with modern education, his keen intellect has enabled him to thoroughly grasp these teachings and he is able to explain them in detail if a question arises over their implications. And the reason is his constant endeavour to bring his life in line with them."

Bhakti and *Sadhana*—devotion to larger causes and dedication to work—were primarily the means through which Jamnalalji strove for fulfilment. As a result he developed an almost Gita-like detachment to the affluence in which he grew up and the material and other kinds of successes that he earned.

Still, he used to be stricken with grief that, in spite of his best efforts, he had not become as pure of body and soul as he wished. Periodically, he used to take stock of his shortcomings and failings and write to Gandhiji asking for advice and guidance for overcoming them.

Gandhiji, in turn, was ever ready to help his 'son' in his spiritual quest by providing answers to his doubts and remedies for his shortcomings. The letters included in this book bring out Jamnalalji's yearning for perfection as well as Gandhiji's

¹ *Harijan*, 8-3-1942.

paternal solicitude for his ward's welfare. Some of them notably two letters¹ written as early as in 1922 from jail, explaining Gandhiji's concepts of truth and self-control contain the quintessence of Gandhiji's philosophy of life. Over the years, Jamnalalji also used to seek Gandhiji's advice and offer his own suggestions on all matters of public work. This part of their correspondence gives an inkling into the course of events in the history of the freedom struggle in the country.

* * *

Jamnalalji learnt one of his first lessons from Gandhiji in January 1918. When the title of Rai Bahadur was awarded to him in the New Year's honours list, he came to Gandhiji seeking his blessings. "What *Ashirwad* can I give you?" Gandhiji told him. "Use the new honour well. It is easy to live down an insult, but difficult to live down an 'Honour'. Honours, titles, etc., are dangerous things. They have been more abused than used. I would wish you to make proper use of them. I hope it may never come in the way of your patriotism and your own spiritual advancement."²

The British Government in India had introduced the practice of awarding titles to Indian citizens in the name of the British Sovereign as a recognition of their status and attainments. But it also served the imperial interest. By distributing these titles, the British rulers expected to build up a class of Indians loyal to the British Raj. Many rich people, with no patriotism and little pride, hankered after these honours for the prestige they brought. As the forces of nationalism gathered strength, the British Government expected these title-holders not only to keep aloof from the freedom movement but also to rally to the support of the Raj. The authorities, naturally, frowned upon anyone who deviated from this path.

They had not reckoned with a patriot like Jamnalal Bajaj. When the Government officials observed that Jamnalalji was associating himself more and more with Gandhiji and other national leaders, they resented it and issued polite warnings to him

¹ See letters No. 9 and 11 in the text.

² *Young India*, 28-6-1973.

to desist from such ‘disloyal’ behaviour. Little did they realise that Jamnalalji, true to Gandhiji’s advice, would not allow the title to come in the way of his patriotism.

Once a high official asked Jamnalalji to meet him in his office at Nagpur. The conversation which ensued is revealing. This incident, took place before Jamnalalji’s crucial decision to throw his lot with Gandhiji and the national movement.

“Do you see Mr. Gandhi quite often?” the official asked.

“Yes, Sir.”

“Is it true that Congress leaders like Sarojini Naidu and others stay as your guests?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“You are aware that you are regarded as a respectable gentleman and Government esteems your services.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“This means that a special responsibility rests on you and the Government expects you will carry it out.”

“It is perfectly all right. But Government must know that I have nothing to do with the political opinions of those who stay with me as my guests. If you have any reports regarding my political views and if you want any explanation from me regarding them, you may ask for it. But if the Government thinks that I should not entertain guests who are my friends, whether they agreed with me in political views or not, it is not fair. No self-respecting person can submit to such arbitrary desires of Government.”

“Quite so, quite so. It is quite true that no harm would be done by your associating with Mr. Gandhi, because you are quite reasonable and wise. But it may affect other people adversely and so you must be careful.”

“It is my duty to treat my friends with hospitality when they come to me as my guests. As for Gandhiji, I have the greatest respect for him and I can never sever my relations with him.”

Another similar incident took place soon afterwards. Jamnalalji had requested the Chief Commissioner to perform the opening ceremony of the new building of the Marwadi Vidyalaya at Wardha. One of the Chief Commissioner’s deputies told him: “If your attitude remains the same, the Chief Com-

missioner will not be able to comply with your request." To this, Jamnalalji replied: "That depends on his pleasure. I cannot change my attitude merely to suit his wishes." The official flew into a temper. Banging his table, he shouted: "After securing a Rai Bahadurship, you have started making friends with the nationalist leaders. You want to benefit by the friendship of both."

But Jamnalalji refused to be provoked. He replied calmly: "I never asked for any Rai Bahadurship. Even before it came to me unsought, my relations with the Congress leaders were exactly as they are now." "Very well. You may settle the whole matter with the Deputy Commissioner of Wardha," said the official, rising in his chair. Getting up himself, Jamnalalji affirmed: "There is no question of any settlement. My friends will be my guests hereafter as before." The British officials, evidently, were wasting their time.

* * *

As soon as Gandhiji launched his Non-cooperation Movement in 1921, Jamnalalji threw himself into it heart and soul. The title of Rai Bahadur was the first casualty. He returned the title, along with his arms licences and firearms, to the Government. As boycott of the British Indian courts was one of the items of the Non-cooperation Movement, he withdrew all his suits pending in various courts of law and advised his fellow-businessmen to do likewise and settle their disputes by arbitration. He himself took the initiative in setting up arbitration tribunals for the purpose.

With increasing involvement in the freedom movement, Jamnalalji made a number of far-reaching changes in the mode of his own life as well as that of his family. His wife Jankidevi, having been brought up in a highly conservative family, used to observe *purdah*. When Gandhiji made an appeal for the abolition of the *purdah* as a first step in the emancipation of women, Jamnalalji made a start with his own wife. She not only complied with his wish, but embarked on a campaign to persuade other women to discard the *purdah*.

At the Calcutta Congress in 1906, presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji, Jamnalalji who had attended it when he was

hardly seventeen, had taken the pledge to use only Swadeshi articles for his personal needs. He now decided that he and his family would use only *khadi*, which was an essential article of faith of the Non-cooperation Movement. He also saw to it that no foreign fabrics were used to adorn even the idols in the Lakshminarayan Temple belonging to the family. At a huge bonfire in the large courtyard in the foreground of his residence (later named Gandhi Chowk), members of the family ceremonially burnt every bit of foreign cloth in their possession including costly silk saris with gold and silver brocade belonging to Jankidevi. The people of the town followed the Bajaj household in piling their foreign clothes on this 'bonfire as a symbolic protest against the British Raj.

As part of the Non-cooperation Movement, a large number of lawyers gave up their legal practice. To help the families of those among them who suffered hardship, Jamnalalji donated two lakhs of rupees to a fund for supporting them. This fund was later merged with the larger Tilak Swaraj Fund. "As long as India has sons like Seth Jamnalal, India need not despair of retaining her honour and freedom," commented *Young India*¹.

It was but natural that he was made a Member of the Congress Working Committee. He was also appointed its Treasurer. His duty as Treasurer, as he saw it, was three-fold: to actively collect the funds needed; to see that every pie out of them was utilised for the work in the best possible manner; and to maintain proper accounts. Moreover, when the funds fell short, he would unhesitatingly contribute from his own pocket. The meticulous care with which he handled public funds evoked admiration. As early as 1924, Rajendra Prasad said: "He has a genius for practical affairs, which enables him to probe deep and minutely into any question that comes up to him for decision, especially if it concerns the funds or property of a public institution. He insists that money collected from the public must be properly spent and he is very strict about keeping proper accounts of them. He will not hesitate to give away lakhs but cannot bear to see a single pie wasted."

In accordance with the three main decisions taken at the

¹ *Young India*, 4-5-1922

Nagpur session of the Congress, Jamnalalji took an active part in collecting a crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, enrolling one crore members for the Congress, and starting 20 lakh charkhas in different parts of the country to give an impetus to the propagation of khadi.

* * *

On Jamnalalji's initiative, and with Gandhiji's blessings, the Gandhi Seva Sangh was founded in 1923, with the object of creating a body of workers who would devote all their time to the service of the country. The members of the Sangh had to affirm abiding faith in truth and non-violence,, and total devotion to the constructive programme of Gandhiji. A friend had donated Rs. 1,01,000. To this Jamnalalji added his own Rs. 2,50,000, and this formed the nucleus of the fund for the work of the Sangh.

Vinoba Bhave, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad and Vallabhbhai Patel, among others, were the first active members of the Sangh, and Jamnalalji was elected its President. The Sangh became the main vehicle of the Gandhian constructive activities. It supported a number of field workers to carry this work to different parts of the country. The Sangh was one of the truly Gandhian institutions set up in the country.

* * *

In April 1923, during the country-wide observance of the anniversary of the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre, the Government imposed a ban on flying the National Flag in the Civil Lines at Nagpur. As Gandhiji was in jail, the people looked to Jamnalal Bajaj to give them a lead. It was not an easy task for Jamnalalji to launch a struggle without Gandhiji's advice and guidance. But the honour of the Flag had to be upheld. Jamnalalji accepted the challenge. A public meeting was held in Nagpur at which thousands gathered. The people wanted to launch Satyagraha, and began enrolling themselves as volunteers. Batches after batches of Satyagrahis holding aloft the National Flag marched to the scene and courted arrest. As the movement progressed volunteers poured in from all parts of the country.

"The slightest indication of strength on our part unnerves Government and provokes it into acts of angry madness. That

is what happened in Nagpur. The fight went on merrily, and in a spirit of good humour on both sides, so long as the bureaucracy was sure that we would give out. But two months' determined fighting showed that we were not men to tire out. Jamnalalji began sending stronger contingents and had made preparations for a huge demonstration on the 18th. How else was he to celebrate the incarceration day of Bapu, who regards him as his fifth son? So he made an appeal to the country and the country responded. The authorities were taken by surprise and began running amuck. The fifth son was taken with his best colleagues and in the morning there was a big round up. Every camp was besieged, and every one who cared to offer himself up as a volunteer was taken. There were upwards of 250 arrests, and the latest telegram is that they have all been sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment. The eighteenth could not have been more fittingly celebrated.”¹

In a letter written the day before his own arrest, Jamnalalji said : “I trust that by God’s grace and the blessings of Bapu and all other elders I shall be able to pass the incarceration with courage and peaceful mind and utilise the time in spiritual meditation.” At the trial, he declared before the Magistrate : “I have joined this movement in the belief that it is a righteous cause and I shall most joyfully and peacefully put up with all the sufferings I might encounter in the pursuit of it. God will give me the strength needed to bear the sufferings.” He was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for 18 months and a fine of Rs. 3,000, with a further term of four and a half months in default.

Pointing out the significance of this unusually harsh sentence C. Rajagopalachari commented: “If there be any doubt still in anyone’s mind as to the executive power carrying the magistracy as bond-maid, it will be cleared by the sentence imposed on Jamnalalji. Government was not satisfied that the movement would die in six months. So three counts had to be made up in order to get thrice the maximum sentence provided by the law. So the indictment was laid that he was present and abetted on

¹ Mahadev Desai in *Young India*, 21-6-1923

three days. 'I was present on many more days, not only on three,' said innocent Jamnalalji, not knowing the purpose of the Magistrate."¹

Jamnalalji naturally declined to pay the fine and in consequence his motor car and tongas were attached by the authorities. But when they were put up for public auction not a single bidder came forward. Ultimately they had to be sold to an official in an Indian Princely State for a meagre sum.

Mahadev Desai's description of this Flag Satyagraha is as graphic as it is touching:

"In one of his memorable articles on Civil Disobedience Mahatma Gandhi has expressed his dream of ideal civil resisters. They would be, he said, like flocks of innocent lambs being led to the slaughter house, with full consciousness of the fact. When I read accounts of the great Satyagraha of the Akalis last year, I imagined that they must have answered Mahatmaji's description of ideal civil resisters. I had only to call my imagination to aid, as I was not privileged to witness that sacred fight. But when I visited Nagpur last week, and when I saw batches of volunteers with the Swarajya Flag being led to the scene of Satyagraha by Seth Jamnalalji, I saw with my own eyes the dream of Mahatmaji realised. It was a privilege to watch these valiant bands march through the town to the Civil Lines, doomed to be arrested and led to prison. They were marching cheerfully on, with *Hindustan Hamara* on their lips, marching to the tune of that National Song and, I am sure, without the slightest anger or rancour in their breastsIt is a splendid spectacle.....And yet these men are not drawn from the so-called lettered classes. They are mostly drawn from classes who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, who return home tired from the day's work and retire to their beds after prayer to the Giver of all good. You will not find much 'culture' about them, 'culture' of the accepted type. But culture in the sense of a consciousness of their duty and the readiness to give of their best to their motherland, they have in abundance. Their best merit is that they are not people of 'little faith'.....

"And what is it that has drawn such devoted fighters to

¹ *Young India*, 19-7-1923

this movement? Surely, it is the unique sacrifice of the men who are leading the movement, and their simple faith. But no less is the justice of the cause responsible for the hearty response. ‘Surely you should not offend the susceptibilities of those who are devoted to the Union Jack?’ was the question put to Shriyut Jamnalalji by one of the police officers. Straight went the reply, ‘Why should they resent the Swarajya Flag? They might tomorrow resent my white cap and my khadi dhoti. Am I therefore to discard them when I enter those sacred precincts called the Civil Lines?’ That is the position so truly put by the man, than whom no one has sacrificed more for the Constructive Programme, but who feels that even his absorbing interest in that programme should not allow him to swallow the insult.”¹

The part played by Jamnalalji in connection with the Flag Satyagraha won him admiration all over the country.

“Well done my brave Bania. Longing touch your feet. Kitchlu joins,” wired Maulana Mohammad Ali.

The All India Congress Committee passed a special resolution in this connection: “This meeting of the A.I.C.C. offers its congratulations to Seth Jamnalal Bajaj on his incarceration for his part in the Satyagraha Campaign at Nagpur and assures him of its whole-hearted support of the said Campaign.”

* * * *

After his release from jail in 1924, Jamnalalji’s association with Gandhiji became still closer and he undertook an extensive tour of the country to propagate the Constructive Programme formulated by Gandhiji as an integral part of the freedom movement.

It had been decided at the Cocanada Congress in December 1923 to set up an All-India Khaddar Board to organise and carry on *khadi* work throughout the country. Jamnalalji, who was appointed as Chairman of the Board, threw himself heart and soul into this activity. He shared Gandhiji’s conviction that the economic salvation of the country could be achieved only through the *charkha* and other cottage industries.

“He gave as much time as, if not more than I, to *Khadi*,” Gandhiji wrote. “I may have given the *mantra*, but Jamnalalji

¹ *Young India*, 17-5-1923

devoted his intelligence, his powers of organisation and his money to give form to the scheme. He had the gift of seeking out and creating workers too. He felt with me that Swaraj was to be found in *khadi*, and he organised it while I was in jail, or else it might have died.”¹

The All-India Spinners' Association was set up by the A.I.C.C. in September 1925 with Gandhiji as its President. Jamnalalji was chosen as its Treasurer. Jamnalalji, characteristically, took upon himself greater responsibility in running this institution, in order to relieve Gandhiji. Eventually and inevitably, the entire responsibility of directing its affairs fell on Jamnalalji's shoulders.

When the All-India Village Industries Association was set up by Gandhiji in 1935 as part of his larger rural reconstruction programme, Jamnalalji gifted away his spacious garden house in Wardha, and the extensive grounds surrounding it, to the institution. In memory of Gandhiji's nephew, Maganlal Gandhi, who had been the very spirit of Gandhian constructive activities at Sabarmati Ashram and who passed away prematurely in 1928, the area was named as Maganwadi. Over the years, the institution grew in size and scope and extended its activities to cover research and development in a large number of cottage industries which were languishing for want of encouragement and help. Today, apart from having a museum of cottage arts and crafts, this centre runs numerous village industries under its auspices, and also houses an institute for providing training in village industries, named appropriately after Jamnalal Bajaj.

Propagation of Hindi was an essential item of the Constructive Programme in order to carry the message of the Congress to the masses and also to develop a common national language. Jamnalalji took to it with great enthusiasm. He felt that in order to intensify the effort for propagation of Hindi in the non-Hindi regions it was necessary to establish separate organisations in these areas through which facilities should be provided to the people to learn the language. He, therefore, helped to establish the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha at Madras in the early twenties which gave a great impetus to

¹ *Harijan*, 8-3-1942

the study and propagation of Hindi all over Southern India. He also undertook an extensive tour of the country, especially the non-Hindi regions, to propagate the cause of Hindi.

Jamnalalji also persuaded Gandhiji to publish a Hindi edition of his Gujarati weekly, *Navajivan*, and agreed to bear the entire expenses. He was also instrumental in starting Hindi journals like *Karmaveer*, *Pratap* and *Rajasthan Kesari* and establishing the Sasta Sahitya Mandal, a publishing house for bringing out standard books in Hindi on various topics of national importance at low prices.

Some work for propagation of Hindi in other non-Hindi areas like Maharashtra, Gujarat and Eastern India was also being carried on from the early twenties, but it was felt that a central organisation should be set up to intensify the efforts. The Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti was, therefore, established in 1936 with head-quarters at Wardha. Jamnalalji collected a lakh of rupees for this institution, and himself donated Rs. 25,000 as his personal contribution.

Even before he came into close contact with Gandhiji, Jamnalalji had outgrown the constraints of caste, community and creed. Referring to this Gandhiji said : "Let me tell you one thing which, perhaps, many do not know. This passion for removal of untouchability and freedom from communal feelings, as well as equal regard for all religions, Jamnalalji does not at all owe to me. It is not possible for anyone to transfer his conviction to another. All one can do is to help another to manifest that conviction which is already in him. But in respect of Jamnalalji, I could not take the credit for having even helped him to arrive at or to manifest those convictions in his life. He had these convictions in him long before he met me, and he had lived up to them. It was these inner convictions of his that brought him and me together and made possible the close co-operation in which we have been able to work together for so many years."¹

As early as 1928 when the movement for Harijan uplift was still in its infancy, Jamnalalji took the bold step of throwing open to the 'untouchables' the Lakshminarayan Temple at

¹ *Harijan*, 24-10-1936

Wardha built by his grandfather—the first temple in India to be opened to Harijans. There was considerable opposition from the trustees of the temple at first. It took Jamnalalji eight years of patient cajoling to accomplish the task of bringing them round.

Subsequently, Jamnalalji went a step further by partaking of food cooked by Harijans. The die-hard section of his community was scandalised, and got him excommunicated by the caste Panchayat. But Jamnalalji stood firm.

Later, some members of the community went on a deputation to Gandhiji. Gandhiji who was in complete agreement with Jamnalalji, appealed to them to take a higher and nobler view of Jamnalalji's mission. He told them: "Jamnalalji has chosen a wider field of service. He cannot exclusively identify himself with any particular community. The world is his family and he can serve his community only through the service of humanity. So let Jamnalalji go his way You should give him your blessings even if you cannot follow him. For a day will come when not only you but even the orthodox section will recognise that by his action Jamnalalji rendered the truest service to Hinduism and the future generations will thank him for it."¹

Jamnalalji went on with his mission undaunted. He became Secretary of the Anti-untouchability Committee of the Indian National Congress and carried on incessant propaganda in favour of temple entry. He succeeded in getting the famous Dattatreya Temple of Ellichpur in Berar opened to Harijans in 1929 and himself performed the opening ceremony. He also issued a forceful appeal to the trustees of Hindu public temples throughout the country. "Untouchability among the Hindus is no ordinary evil. That a community known throughout the world's history for its religious tolerance and its most catholic culture should have established and maintained for centuries, and should still countenance in the name of religion, a social code which brands for life human beings as unworthy of ordinary intercourse and capable of polluting others by mere touch or sight, is a tragedy and a riddle that baffles every right-minded Indian today," observed Jamnalalji in the course of his appeal. "It is an irony of fate that our glorious inheritance notwithstanding, we should have come

¹ *Young India*, 13-12-1928

to treat today one-third of our own kith and kin as pariahs condemned to treatment which we may not mete out even to dogs or domesticated animals. No wonder if under the inexorable law of Karma, we are in turn ourselves treated the world over as pariahs and untouchables.....

"All this must be painful and humiliating to you as it should be to every good Hindu. The remedy, however, lies in our own hands. We must admit with open arms these 'little brothers' of ours in the social fold without reservation. The barest justice requires us to let them draw drinking water from the village well, to let their children have the same benefit of learning the three R's at the village school as our own, and to fling open for them the Temples of God that we open to the rest of the Hindus. We have got to take these unfortunate brethren of ours to our bosom, and befriend them in all humility as a matter of penance for all our sins of omission and commission."¹

Jamnalalji's concern for Hindu-Muslim unity was equally fervent. Everywhere, during his countrywide tours, he would speak on the subject with a deep conviction. He strongly felt that without communal harmony it would be impossible to fight British imperialism.

In September 1924 there was an outbreak of communal trouble in Nagpur. Jamnalalji happened to be passing through the riot affected area in a tonga. On seeing an angry crowd bent on violence, he got down from the tonga, and tried to pacify the mob. Stones and brickbats were flying around, and one of these hit him in his arm. He was badly hurt, and had to be taken to a hospital for treatment. On coming to know of the incident, Gandhiji wrote to him: "The report of your injury caused me not the slightest grief. I believe that many like us may have to lay down our lives. The poison has spread so widely that we cannot hope to be saved from this catastrophe without the sacrifice of some of the purest men from amongst us."

At Gandhiji's behest, Jamnalalji visited the North-West Frontier Province to enquire into the communal riots at Kohat in which members of the Hindu minority had been the victims of Pathan fury. With his sympathetic approach and persuasive

¹ *Young India*, 5-9-1929

skill, he was able to assuage the bitter feelings of both the communities.

* * *

When Gandhiji decided to launch the Salt Satyagraha movement in 1930, Jamnalalji set up a Satyagraha Camp at Vile Parle, a suburb of Bombay. A large number of volunteers were enrolled for training in Satyagraha. But, after the Camp had been in progress for a few weeks, the authorities took possession of it, arrested all the inmates and confiscated the property. Jamnalalji who had gone to Wardha for some work, was arrested there, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

His diary gives a fairly detailed account of his life in the Dhulia Jail where he was kept for several months. He would get up early in the morning and, after prayers, take physical exercise by drawing about 60 buckets of water from the prison well. He read the daily newspapers to improve his working knowledge of English, but most of his time, however, he spent in reading Gandhiji's writings on various aspects of constructive work. He made a special study of the economics of *khadi*. Study of Urdu was also a part of his daily routine. He used to spin daily for about an hour. Kishorelal Mashruwala and Gokulbhai Bhatt were his fellow-prisoners. Later K. M. Munshi and Valjibhai Desai joined them. Although he was placed in "A" Class he would only eat the food meant for "C" class prisoners.

His wife, Jankidevi, had helped Jamnalalji in starting the camp at Vile Parle, and after Jamnalalji was arrested she took charge of the camp. But she was specially advised by Kasturba Gandhi not to court arrest at this time, and to proceed to Bihar and Bengal to urge people to join the civil disobedience movement. Accordingly, she toured these two provinces, addressed a number of public meetings exhorting people to wear khadi, to break the salt laws and to picket liquor shops. Her movements and speeches were reported in the newspapers. Gandhiji, who was then in jail, was happy to read these accounts. He wrote to her on the 27th July 1930: "Now-a-days you make speeches and your name appears in the press. When I see the name of 'Jankibai Bajaj' in the papers from time to time, should it not make me feel that Jamnalal and all of us did well in going to jail

and might as well continue to stay there! I always believed that behind your apparent lack of confidence there was full self-confidence. May God strengthen it!"

Jankidevi was eventually arrested at Wardha early in 1932 and sentenced to six months imprisonment. The jail food did not suit her and she lost 23 pounds within a week. Once, a rumour got around that she had died in jail. Fortunately, her health improved after a few days and the authorities permitted her to have a woman-prisoner as her attendant. However, by the time she was released in August 1932, her health had been shattered. It took her many months to recover.

* * *

As early as 1920, Jamnalalji had persuaded Gandhiji to set up a branch of the Sabarmati Ashram at Wardha and had provided the requisite land, buildings and other facilities for the purpose. Gandhiji also agreed to visit this Ashram—named Satyagraha Ashram—at least once a year to watch its progress.

Vinoba Bhave had been an inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram since 1916. Even though he was hardly twenty years old at the time, he had acquired a profound knowledge of Sanskrit and the religious scriptures. Education was his main field of activity in the Ashram, but he participated in all the daily chores including cooking and hard manual labour in the farm and workshop.

Jamnalalji, after having observed Vinobaji, for some time, felt that he would be the ideal person to take charge of the Wardha Ashram and requested Gandhiji to depute him, but Gandhiji was reluctant to spare him. Ultimately, Jamnalalji's persistent pleadings succeeded, and Vinobaji came to Wardha in 1921. The Ashram originally situated in Wardha town was shifted to Nalwadi in 1932 and to Paunar, its present location, in 1938.

Having adopted Gandhiji as his spiritual father, Jamnalalji looked up to Vinobaji as his spiritual Guru. He had the good fortune of being in Vinobaji's company in jail for several months, at Nagpur in 1923, Dhulia in 1931-32 and Nagpur again in 1941 when they were both imprisoned during the various Satyagraha campaigns. Vinobaji's influence and guidance consider-

ably helped Jamnalalji in his spiritual growth. At the persuasion of Jamnalalji during their incarceration Vinobaji translated the *Bhagawadgita* into simple Marathi, which published later under the title *Gitai* (*Gita* the Mother) has become the most popular version of the *Gita* among the Marathi knowing people. On Jamnalalji's request Vinobaji also gave daily discourses on the *Gita* to his fellow-prisoners which were collected and later published under the title *Gita Pravachan* (Discourses on the *Gita*).

Jamnalalji also put his wife and children under Vinobaji's tutelage, and all of them came to regard him as their *Kula Guru* (Family Preceptor).

* * *

For many years, Jamnalalji had been urging Gandhiji to make Wardha his home. He thought that Gandhiji's work would be considerably facilitated if he shifted to Wardha which was centrally situated and easily accessible from all parts of the country. He also felt that if Gandhiji stayed at Wardha he himself would be in a better position to relieve Gandhiji of a greater part of his burden of work by taking up more responsibilities on himself under Gandhiji's constant guidance. But Gandhiji had felt that his place was in Gujarat from where he would be able to better serve the country.

On the eve of his famous 'Dandi March', Gandhiji had taken a vow that he would not return to live in the Sabarmati Ashram until India achieved *Swaraj*. He was arrested and imprisoned and when he was finally released in 1934, India had yet to win *Swaraj*. He, therefore, decided to accept Jamnalalji's offer and made his 'home' at Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha. Thus Jamnalalji's long-cherished wish was fulfilled. Two years later, in April 1936, Gandhiji shifted his headquarters permanently to Sevagram,¹ a village near Wardha. A major part of this Village was owned by Jamnalalji which he made over to Gandhiji.

When Gandhiji shifted to Wardha, the place soon became the 'political capital' of India. The meetings of the Congress Working Committee and several other organisations with which Gandhiji was connected, were held there. All the year round

¹ Originally known as Segaoon.

apart from the congress leaders who came to attend these meetings, there was a constant stream of visitors from all over India and abroad who came to meet Gandhiji. The responsibility of making arrangements for the meetings and playing host to the numerous guests naturally fell on Jamnalalji's shoulders. He, therefore, built a spacious guest house at Bajajwadi for accommodating the visitors. Although only vegetarian food was served from a common kitchen Jamnalalji took personal care to cater to the individual tastes and even fads of the guests and to look after their comforts. Bajajwadi became a 'National Guest House'. Even to this day this tradition is being maintained.

After Jamnalalji became a Member of the Congress Working Committee and Treasurer of the Congress, he came in close contact with most of the Congress leaders and other prominent persons in different walks of life. He gained the respect and affection of all of them with his warm and open nature. C. Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Prasad with whom he generally agreed on all matters of policy were very close to him; so were Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, in spite of their occasional political differences. When Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Frontier Gandhi, was exiled from his province in 1936-37 he stayed at Wardha with some members of his family as Jamnalalji's guest.

Apart from inviting Gandhiji and Vinobaji, Jamnalalji persuaded several top-ranking constructive workers to settle down at Wardha. Shrikrishnadas Jaju who was deeply interested in education and social reform shifted to Wardha at Jamnalalji's instance. A man of strict probity, he became Jamnalalji's closest friend and adviser. When Vinobaji came to Wardha, several workers from Sabarmati Ashram, came along with him. Dada Dharmadhikari and Annasaheb Sahasrabudhe, working in the fields of education and other constructive activities, also came there on Jamnalalji's invitation. Shantabhai Raniwala came there to take up the work of women's uplift and education.

When Gandhiji settled down there, Wardha became the headquarters of all constructive activities. A host of luminaries from various fields of work were attracted to settle down there to direct these activities. Prominent among them were Kishorelal

Mashruwala who became President of the Gandhi Seva Sangh after Jamnalalji's resignation; the brothers J. C. Kumarappa and Bharatan Kumarappa in charge of the All-India Village Industries Association; Kakasaheb Kalelkar who guided Hindi Prachar work and other educational activities; Krishnadas Gandhi who took up *Khadi* work; E. W. Aryanayakam and his wife Ashadevi who were both interested in education on national lines and took up the propagation of Basic Education through the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, and Shriman Narayan whose main field of work was education in all its aspects. And, of course, Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal were there as Gandhiji's secretaries. Many of them were not only experts in their own chosen fields of work but thinkers, scholars and writers who propounded Gandhian philosophy and thought and carried the message of Mahatma Gandhi to the people. Hundreds of other workers were there to assist in all these activities. Jamnalalji the ever-willing host that he was, looked after the needs and comforts of everyone of them and established several colonies at Sevagram, Bajajwadi, Maganwadi, Kakawadi, Gopuri, Paunar and other places for housing them.

And thus, Jamnalalji's Wardha became the nerve-centre of the whole complex of political, economic and social activities which in substance can be described as the Gandhian revolution.

* * *

After his grandfathers' death, Jamnalalji always had a feeling of compunction in that he had no moral right to enjoy the wealth he had once renounced. But, at the same time, he was in a dilemma because he could not reject his inheritance and run away from his responsibilities. He came to realise, even before he had come in close contact with Gandhiji, that wealth, whether self-earned or inherited, could be a source of true happiness when it was utilised for the welfare of his fellowmen.

After he adopted Gandhiji as his father, he virtually placed his entire resources at Gandhiji's disposal for public work. On himself he used to spend very little. After the Karachi Congress in 1930, he limited his expenses to Rs. 500 per month in accordance with the resolution of the Congress, and within this amount were included his secretary's salary and his own third-class travelling expenses, postages and other sundry expenses.

Even then he used to be assailed by a feeling of discomfort for having at all come in possession of his wealth. He, therefore, thought of giving away his entire fortune for public work as a trust, and often discussed the matter with Gandhiji. Gandhiji advised Jamnalalji that he should not take a hasty decision in the matter. The way Jamnalalji treated his wealth as a trust and utilised it for the public good evidently furnished Gandhiji with the model of a 'Trustee' of his conception. 'Whenever I wrote of wealthy men becoming trustees of their wealth for the common good I had always this merchant prince principally in mind,' wrote Gandhiji after Jamnalalji's death. "If his trusteeship did not reach the ideal, the fault was not his. I deliberately restrained him. I did not want him in his enthusiasm to take a single step which in his cooler moments he might regret. His simplicity was all his own. Every house he built for himself became a Dharmashala."¹

Commenting on this aspect of Jamnalalji's character, Mahadev Desai said : "Like some of those rare men who are gifted with the power of sublimating their desires and their passions, he was gifted with the power to sublimate his sense of possession. He followed the Master cheerfully through all the numerous vicissitudes of the latter's life, because although he had great possessions, he had divested himself of the sense of proprietorship in them."²

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Relentless introspection coupled with severe self-assessment was an important trait of Jamnalalji's character. This is a quality which he shared with his mentor, the Mahatma. Although he constantly endeavoured to overcome his shortcomings with Gandhiji's help and guidance and achieved a good measure of success, over the years as he became more and more self-critical, he used to bemoan that he was still far from having got rid of all his imperfections. The confidence which Gandhiji and other close associates reposed in him gave him some solace and self-assurance; yet his feeling of inadequacy persisted. The mental turmoil which led to his resignation from the Gandhi Seva Sangh

¹ *Harijan*, 15-2-1942

² *Harijan*, 22-2-1942

is an illustration of this aspect of his character.

The Sangh had been founded on his initiative in 1923, and he was elected as its President; but in course of time he came to feel that he had no moral right to remain as its President, when, according to his own assessment, he did not come up to the ideal of a true Satyagrahi. He, therefore, submitted his resignation from this office in 1934. His colleagues strongly felt that he was wrong in his self-assessment and tried to persuade him to withdraw his resignation. But on his insistence, it was accepted, and Kishorelal Mashruwala was elected the President.

After some time, he sent in his resignation even from the ordinary membership of the Sangh. He withdrew it for a while on his colleagues' insistence; but the breaking point came when Gandhiji, addressing the annual meeting of the Sangh in 1939, said that those who did not have an abiding faith in God should rather forget about *Satyagraha* and resign from the Sangh. Jamnalalji, who was in his fiftieth year at the time, was undergoing a deep emotional crisis. Gandhiji's admonition appeared to him as crucially related to his own processes of self-appraisal. He was a prisoner in Jaipur Jail at the time. From there, he finally sent his resignation from the membership of the Sangh to Kishorelal Mashruwala, the President. Kishorelal was aware of the inner crisis Jamnalalji was passing through. He made some effort to dissuade him, but Jamnalalji remained firm in his resolve.¹

To have come so close to the Gandhian ideal in his relentless striving for self-purification was not an easy task. It had taken Jamnalalji a long and hard struggle, a struggle which had something of the agony and intensity of the Master's own life-long 'experiments with truth'.

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A unique quality of Jamnalal Bajaj was his capacity to identify, pick up and train workers needed for carrying out different programmes of constructive work. Gandhiji himself described Jamnalalji as 'a capable fisher of men who had the knack of gathering people around him and inspiring them with

1. See correspondence between Kishorelal Mashruwala and Jamnalal Bajaj in this connection. — Letters No. 74, 75 and 76.

his idealism'. Wherever he went, throughout the length and breadth of the country, he would always be on the look out for bright and diligent young men and women who would be willing to take up service of the country. At the same time, as a public worker put it, Jamnalalji was keenly aware that 'those who devoted themselves to national service could not live on air and water'. He, therefore, saw to it that those who did not have private income of their own to fall back upon, were provided with adequate means to support themselves and their families. In many cases he arranged for the education and medical care of their children. He would often take personal interest in their family problems. He used to regularly send financial assistance to numerous needy political and social workers all over the country. All this he did naturally and unobtrusively.

There was also another aspect of Jamnalalji's deep concern for others. He was always on the look out for suitable matches for the children from among the families of his large circle of friends. For this purpose he maintained a diary in which he noted down the names of boys and girls eligible for marriage and approached the families with suitable proposals whenever occasions arose. In this manner he succeeded in arranging a large number of marriages, especially for the children of public workers, with hardly any expense, thus relieving them of a great responsibility and burden. He also encouraged and helped in arranging intercaste and intercommunal marriages. The marriages of Acharya J. B. Kripalani with Suchetaben and Miss Safia Somjee, a Congress youth leader of Bombay, with Saadullah Khan, the son of Dr. Khan Saheb, the eminent Congress leader from North-West Frontier Province, were among the well-known alliances brought about by Jamnalalji. Because of the keen interest which he took in this work, Jamnalalji was affectionately nick-named as *Shadilal* in his intimate circles.

Once Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (who was a widower) happened to see this diary on Jamnalalji's table and puckishly wrote down his own name at the top of the list of boys. When Jamnalalji saw the Sardar's prank, he told him half humorously, half seriously: "How dare you enter your own name in my list

without first getting your daughter, Maniben, married off?"

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Though Jamnalalji was never able to talk fluently in English, he had a native understanding of its inflections and nuances. At meetings of the Congress Working Committee, composed as it was of the best brains in the country, he was many a time able to suggest the appropriate word or phrase needed for improving the draft of a resolution to bring out the exact sense of what was intended to be conveyed. If at times he himself was not able to find an appropriate expression, he would convey to the Committee in Hindi the correct sense needed in the context and would not be content till the proper expression was found. This talent in Jamnalalji is said to have impressed such learned members of the Committee as Pandit Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das. Motilal Nehru once remarked that Jamnalalji was the clearest-headed person in the Working Committee. There is no better witness to this aspect of Jamnalalji's talent than Mahadev Desai, a close friend and colleague and a keen observer.

"Jamnalalji," he wrote, "had the virtue of fearlessness which the absence of a slavish education had left un-impaired.....

"The fearlessness came into full play during the twenty years of his public life under Gandhiji's leadership. President Kruger was unlettered and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek knows no English. Ignorance of English was no handicap to them. It had in fact left the native vigour of their minds unspoilt. Even so with Jamnalalji. He could see the implications of an intricately worded Congress resolution quicker than many other members, and he would often raise his warning voice lest the committee should put their feet into seemingly innocent propositions. It was he who raised earliest the question of moral and material cooperation in the War and said that a nation of shop-keepers could not be duped by the promise of moral co-operation."¹

"Many a time have I seen him, during the course of a discussion, severely but respectfully criticising Mahatma Gandhi himself. On Committees few persons can be found as plain

¹ *Harijan*, 22-2-1942

spoken as he," wrote Rajendra Prasad. When, for instance, in 1924, Gandhiji allowed the Swarajists to contest the elections to the Legislative Councils under Congress auspices, Jamnalalji strongly opposed the move. He sincerely felt that this would weaken the Congress and seriously undermine the constructive work to which Gandhiji himself attached the greatest importance. Again, when the Congress decided to accept office in the Provinces after the elections in 1937 and Gandhiji permitted the Congress Ministers to take the oath of loyalty to the King Emperor under the existing Constitution, Jamnalalji expressed his opposition. How could Congressmen who had pledged themselves to winning complete independence for India take such an oath? Gandhiji explained that there was a difference between a moral oath and a merely routine constitutional oath. Although he was not fully convinced, Jamnalalji did not press his point further as the consensus was in favour of Gandhiji's interpretation.

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Jamnalalji did not have the benefit of a formal education himself. Although this did not handicap him in any way because of his other extraordinary qualities, he felt that the younger generation needed to get a proper education if the country was to progress. He, therefore, took keen interest in the field of education even from a very young age. In 1910, he opened a hostel at Wardha for the benefit of students who came from outside to attend the local school. In 1912 he started a high school in Wardha, named Marwari Vidyalaya. The same year, the Marwari Shiksha Mandal, a society for promoting higher education, was established at Nagpur.

Jamnalalji was also the founder of the Shekhavati Shiksha Mandal and Madhav Vidyarathi Griha (named after his deceased brother) at Sikar. He was also closely associated with the Marwari Vidyalaya opened at Bombay in 1915. Apart from this he made liberal donations to the Gujarat Vidyapith, the Banaras Hindu University for a library and the Science Institute of Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose for research.

Under the inspiration of Jamnalalji and with the help of a donation given by a Bombay industrialist, Seth Govindram

Seksaria, the Marwari Shiksha Mandal established a Commerce College at Wardha in 1940. It was the first college of its kind in Central India. Later, after the passing away of Jamnalalji, under the guidance of his elder son Kamalnayan and son-in-law Shriman Narayan, the Mandal established two more Commerce Colleges at Nagpur and Jabalpur and the Jankidevi Bajaj Science College, the Rural Institute and other educational institutions at Wardha. In course of time the headquarters of the Marwari Shiksha Mandal were shifted to Wardha and its name was also changed to Shiksha Mandal.

Another area of Gandhiji's Constructive Programme that Jamnalalji ardently adopted was the emancipation of women. In the 1920s he started a *Kanya Shala* (Girls' School) at Wardha for the education of girls and especially those belonging to the families of the workers imprisoned during the Non-cooperation Movement. In 1930, when Gandhiji embarked on the Dandi March, the girl students from Sabarmati Ashram were shifted to this *Kanya Shala*. In 1934 Jamnalalji opened the Mahilashram for training women from all over India for undertaking constructive work and social service. The *Kanya Shala* was merged with this institution. In spite of his preoccupation with multifarious other activities, he took keen personal interest with a paternal solicitude in these institutions to see that they did not lack in anything by way of funds and other amenities.

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In 1937 Jamnalalji was called upon to preside over a conference of shop-assistants. Commenting on this, Gandhiji wrote at the time: "To have the Conference presided over by Jamnalalji who has numerous shop-assistants in his employment is significant, significant because Jamnalalji knows in his heart no distinction between a seth and a servant, and his shop-assistants, cooks, coachmen and other servants are treated as members of the family. He knows that they need leisure as he needs it, he knows that they need a holiday occasionally as he needs it (but rarely takes it), he knows that they need to live with their wives and children in fair comfort, in clean and well-ventilated habitations to be capable of looking after their own and their children's educational and medical needs, even as he needs to do so. And he also knows

the wretched lot of the average shop-assistant, sweating for ten to thirteen hours without a holiday, on a miserable salary, having to go on leave, if he can get it, without pay, losing every day in health, living a life without cheer, an eternal grind from morning till night.”¹

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During his many countrywide tours in connection with Gandhiji’s constructive work, Jamnalalji also visited several Princely States. The people in these States hardly enjoyed any civil rights and were subjected to all manners of oppression by their Rulers. Jamnalalji observed that they were eager to march hand in hand with the rest of the country in the struggle for freedom. The Indian National Congress as an organisation was not taking direct interest in the affairs of those States at that time, but the Congress leaders in their individual capacity were free to work in this field. Jamnalalji took up the cause for the restoration of civil liberties and establishment of popular Governments in the States. As a first step he helped to organise Praja Mandals in some of the States in Rajasthan as also in Hyderabad for awakening political consciousness among the people. He also took active interest in the activities of the All-India States Peoples Conference, the central organisation, which helped, directed and co-ordinated the activities of the various State units. At his instance the headquarters of the AISPC was shifted to Wardha in the early forties. In support of the people’s movement, he entered into extensive correspondence with the authorities in many States and also met them personally.

Jamnalalji was, as already stated, a subject of the Jaipur State, though he lived in Wardha. He had helped to organise a Praja Mandal in Jaipur and had been elected as its President. The activities of the Praja Mandal were not relished by the Government which passed an order banning Jamnalalji’s entry into the State on the pretext that his presence there would endanger peace.² As any precipitate action by Jamnalalji might have led to grave repercussions all over the country, because of his position in the Indian National Congress, he consulted

¹ *Harijan*, 23-10-1937

² The order ran as under : Whereas it has been made to appear to the

Gandhiji as to the course of action he should follow. Gandhiji advised him not to defy the ban for the time being and he himself took up the issue in public.

Gandhiji warned the State authorities of the grave consequences that would follow Jamnalalji's arrest and ruthless repression of the activities of the Praja Mandal: "Seth Jamnalal is an all India man, though a subject of Jaipur. He is also a Member of the Congress Working Committee, and essentially and admittedly a man of peace. He is the president of an organisation [Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal] which has been working and has been allowed to work in Jaipur for some years. Its activities have always been open. It contains well-known workers who are sober by disposition and who have done much constructive work, both among men and women.....If the action of the Jaipur authorities precipitates a first class crisis it is impossible for the Indian National Congress, and therefore all India, to stand by and look on with indifference whilst Jamnalalji, for no offence whatsoever, is imprisoned and members of the Praja Mandal are dealt with likewise. The Congress will be neglecting its duty if, having power, it shrank from using it and allowed the spirit of the people of Jaipur to be crushed for want of support from the Congress."¹

Jamnalalji gave notice to the authorities that unless the order was withdrawn before a specified date he would enter the State and that the Praja Mandal would hold itself free to take such steps as it might deem necessary for self-expression consistent with human dignity.

Gandhiji also wrote strongly in the *Harijan* disapproving of the action of the Prime Minister of Jaipur, a British Administrator,² but the latter ignored Jamnalalji's letter as well as

Jaipur Government that your presence and activities within the Jaipur State are likely to lead to a breach of the peace, it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquility to prohibit your entry within the Jaipur State. You are therefore, requested not to enter Jaipur territory until further orders.'

¹ In an interview given to a special correspondent of *The Times of India*, *Harijan*, 28-1-1939

² Sir Beauchamp St. John

Gandhiji's warning. Therefore, early in February, Jamnalalji after giving prior intimation to the authorities entered the State in defiance of the ban. He was arrested, taken out of the State territory, and released. But he repeatedly defied the ban until finally the authorities were obliged to put him in prison. Thereupon many other Praja Mandal workers offered satyagraha and were arrested.

The treatment meted out to Jamnalalji as a prisoner of the Jaipur State was harsh. Gandhiji wrote at the time : "It is admitted that he (Jamnalalji) is locked up in an out-of-the way place where the water is said to be 'heavy' according to the Indian notion. It is admitted that the place is difficult of access. He has been given no companion. Why this isolation ? Is he a dangerous character ? Is he an intriguer ? One can understand detention as he chose to defy the ban on his entry into his own birth-place. The authorities know that Sethji is an ideal prisoner. He believes in meticulous observance of jail discipline. It is cruel to isolate him as he has been isolated from the outside world. The greatest want of prisoners is the companionship of their equals in thought, manners and customs. I suggest that without much ado he be transferred to a place which is easily accessible and healthy and where he is allowed company."¹

The State authorities had ordered Jamnalalji's detention for an indefinite period. His general health was not very good at that time and, moreover, he was suffering from arthritis in the knee. He was occasionally brought to a hospital at Jaipur for medical treatment, but on account of some negligence on the part of the hospital staff, his condition deteriorated and his health was completely shattered. But as a true satyagrahi he bore all sufferings cheerfully.

The Jaipur authorities soon realised that it was not possible to suppress the people's movement which was gaining momentum day by day. In August of the same year, Jamnalalji along with other Praja Mandal workers was unconditionally released. The ban on public meetings and processions was withdrawn and the Durbar promised immediate administrative reforms. Jamnalalji's satyagraha and sacrifice had borne fruit.

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¹ *Harijan*, 6-5-1939

With the passing of years, the inner turmoil in Jamnalalji's heart and mind became more intense. There are some deeply touching passages on the agony and ecstasy of a *Sadhaka* in the letter he wrote to Gandhiji when he entered his fiftieth year.¹ "My mind was torn between two opposite trends of thought, one suggesting that I should retire from all public activities and, if possible, also from private ones; and the other telling me that, in case this is not possible, I should take over work involving greater responsibility than at present and immerse myself in it day and night. Now, however, I feel that I am likely to derive greater solace only by giving up all the activities," he said.

But the compulsion of events hardly left him any choice. The state of affairs in Jaipur inexorably drew him into the struggle and led to his imprisonment. The individual Satyagraha movement which followed again found him in jail. His health, shattered by the incarceration in Jaipur, further deteriorated when he was imprisoned again. Having been an active worker all his life, he could not give up public activities altogether, nor was he in a fit physical or mental condition to immerse himself in them day and night as he would have liked to. It was in this mood that, with Gandhiji's blessings, he decided to devote what energies he could muster out of his shattered physical frame to a cause which had been dear to his heart, namely *Goseva*—service of the cow.

As far back as 1928, it had been decided to form an all-India organisation called *Goraksha Samiti* (cow protection society) with Gandhiji as Chairman. But, according to Gandhiji, "The eagle eye of Jamnalalji detected the incongruity in the name. He rightly argued that a very small body of persons could not arrogate to themselves the function of protecting the cow; they could only and in all humility endeavour to serve the cow to the best of their ability. He, therefore, suggested the proper title *Goseva Sangha*, literally *Cow Service Society*."²

Goseva was an important item in Gandhiji's Constructive Programme. But in spite of its importance in the rural economy of India, it had not become possible to propagate it as widely and

¹ See letter No. 66 dated November 4, 1938 in the text.

² *Young India*, 2-8-1928

intensively as had been done in the case of khadi, village industries and other economic activities of the Constructive Programme. Jamnalalji, therefore, felt that he should devote himself entirely to this task, which also answered his own emotional and spiritual urge at the time.

He was convinced that true service of the cow lay in taking steps for improving the cattle wealth of the country, and making the cow a source and symbol of prosperity for the farmer. It was this service to which he now dedicated himself. With his characteristic zeal, in spite of his failing health, in the first week of February 1942, he organised an All-India *Goseva* Conference at Wardha which was attended by many experts and workers from all over the country.

Describing Jamnalalji's last days, Mahadev Desai wrote : "In order to purge himself of all dross he took the greatest step of his life—dedicating himself to the service of the Cow. He left his house.....and went to live in a hut which he called Gopuri. Here he did his spinning, tended his cows with the devotion of King Dileepa and kept a careful record of his thoughts and acts from day to day."¹

* * *

Summing up Jamnalalji's life work, Mahadev Desai said : "Treasurer of the nation's wealth, he was also the treasurer of the nation's honour.. He was among the very few capitalists who recklessly threw themselves in the fray for the nation's freedom, and bore the rigours of imprisonment every time the call was made. His faith burnt brightest when that of others flickered in times of stress and strain and dark despair.....Politics he could understand, but he often regarded it as a sorry game which might soil one's heart and soul. And so he had early set his heart on the constructive part of the Congress programme.....

"Who could have been blessed with a richer life of service? And yet one could notice in various utterances of his a longing for something he had not yet achieved. His sense of truth and justice was keen even to harshness, so far, at any rate, as he was concerned.....He was often overwhelmed by a sense of his

¹ *Harijan*, 22-2-1942

spiritual shortcomings, and he often longed to retire from all public activities. It was this spirit that endeared him to Gandhiji more than the sacrifice of material possessions, almost incomparably great as this was.”¹

* * *

Death came suddenly and peacefully to Jamnalal Bajaj on 11th February 1942. Right up to the day of his death, he was at work attending to matters connected with *Goseva*. As Gandhiji put it, “Such a death as his is accorded to one in a million.”

“As we visited the hut on the day he passed away we saw on the little desk in front of his feet his diary written up complete to the day of his death. Even so his life was complete and regular and God-fearing,” wrote Mahadev Desai. “He had dedicated this to Mother Cow, in order that she may be for him the *Kamadugha* (Fulfiller of all desires), that Cow Nandini had been to King Dileepa. Whether the death that came to him was the blessing given him by the Cow it is difficult to say. Perhaps it was. For no death could be more desirable. Almost until the last moment he was thinking of his Cow and his Gopuri, and when the end came it was so sudden and so quick that it seemed as though he had slipped into blissful peace. But whether the Cow had really proved his *Kamadugha* (or not), there is no doubt that by his dedicated life he had rendered himself Gandhiji’s *Kamadugha*. It is he who had made it possible for Gandhiji to settle first in Wardha and then in Sevagram and it was he who was the living link between the outside world and Gandhiji.

“His death removes the link and leaves both Gandhiji and the outside world much poorer.”²

In Mahadev Desai’s words again :

“The angel
came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Sheth Jaman’s name led all the rest.”

“Those who knew Jamnalalji—and the hundreds of telegrams that have been pouring in from places far and near show

¹ *Harijan*, 22-2-1942.

² *Ibid.*

that the number of that blessed company was great—will not feel unhappy over the alteration I have made in Leigh Hunt's famous lines about Abu Ben Adhem. I do not know if on the fateful afternoon of the 11th Jamnalalji had a vision of any Angel come to receive him in the region of the blessed. But if he had, I am sure, he must have spoken to him:

‘Low but cheerly still; and said

I pray thee then,

Write me as one that loves his fellowmen’¹

Jamnalalji's death cast a gloom throughout the country. Describing Gandhiji's immense grief, Mahadev Desai said: “Never since the death of Maganlal Gandhi in 1928 had any bereavement dealt such a staggering blow on Gandhiji as the sudden and premature death of Jamnalalji. Words fail me when I attempt to describe the feeling of desolation. For two days he bore up bravely consoling the bereaved widow and the aged mother, but on the third day he broke down as he was saying: ‘Childless people adopt sons. But Jamnalalji adopted me as father. He should have been an heir to my all, instead he has left me an heir to his all!’²

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel truly reflected the feelings of the whole country. “No death could have been better. But as the proverb goes, ‘Let a hundred die, but not the nourisher of a hundred.’ Hundreds upon hundreds of our workers in various parts of our country must be shedding silent tears in their cottages. Bapu has lost a true son; Jankidevi and the family a true shelter; the country a loyal servant; the Congress a stately pillar; the Cow her true friend; many institutions their patron; and we have lost a beloved blood-brother. I feel so desolate and forlorn.”

Jankidevi was so deeply grieved that she wished to immolate herself by committing *Sati* on Jamnalalji's funeral pyre. But Gandhiji said that according to him a true *Sati* would be a wife who followed in her husband's footsteps by devoting herself to carry on his mission in life. Thereupon, Jankidevi donated her entire personal wealth of two and a half lakhs of rupees to the *Goseva* Sangh and took a vow dedicating herself to *Goseva*.

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*

Later, she was elected as the President of the Sangh for some time, with Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Ghanshyamdas Birla as Vice Presidents. Ever since she has been espousing the cause of *Goseva* with missionary zeal.

Kamalnayan was out of Wardha at the time of Jamnalalji's death. His first thought on arriving there was to give effect to Jamnalalji's long-cherished wish to create a trust of his wealth and devote it for public work. With Gandhiji's blessings and the concurrence of other members of the family he decided to establish a trust to which they donated Jamnalalji's entire personal wealth as well as his share in the joint family property to be expended for public work. Kamalnayan thereby felt relieved of a great burden which had been weighing on his mind.

* * *

Before a group of Jamnalalji's friends who had gathered at Wardha at Gandhiji's invitation on the 21st and 22nd February to discuss the best ways and means of honouring his memory, Gandhiji poured out 'the agony of his soul'. "Never before, I can say, was a mortal blessed with a 'son' like him. Of course, I have many sons and daughters in the sense that they have done some of my work. But Jamnalalji surrendered himself and his without reservation. There is hardly any activity of mine in which I did not receive his full-hearted cooperation and in which it did not prove to be of the greatest value. He was gifted with a quick intelligence. He was a merchant prince. He placed at my disposal his ample possessions. He became guardian of my time and my health. And he did it all for the public good. The day he died he and Jankidevi were to come to me but he died almost at the very hour he should have been with me. Never before have I felt so forlorn except when Maganlal was snatched away from me fourteen years ago. But I had no doubt then, as I have none now that a calamity of that kind is a blessing in disguise. God wants to try me through and through. I live in the faith that He will give me the strength too to pass through the ordeal."¹

* * *

After Jamnalalji adopted Gandhiji as his father, his wife and children became part of the spiritual household of Gandhiji,

¹ *Harijan*, 22-2-1942

and participated in the political and social movements led by him. Jamnalalji put his own children as well as his nephews, who were his wards, under the tutelage of Gandhiji, and encouraged them to take part in the freedom struggle when they grew up. His elder son, Kamalnayan who had a rigorous training in the Ashrams at Sabarmati and Wardha, and his nephew Prahlad Poddar were among the select band of young volunteers who accompanied Gandhiji on his famous Dandi March in 1930. Kamalnayan who was then 16 fell seriously ill during the March, and was on the point of losing his eye-sight but he refused to give up. Gandhiji, however, compelled him to return to Gujarat Vidyapith to recoup his health and resume his studies. Later, Kamalnayan picketed foreign cloth shops and was badly beaten up by the police. He was arrested for defying a ban on addressing a public meeting and sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment. During the Individual Satyagraha movement launched by Gandhiji in 1940, as a protest against India being dragged into the second World War by the British Government, both Jamnalalji and his younger son Ramkrishna, who was a minor then, offered Satyagraha and were imprisoned.

When Gandhiji launched the 'Quit India' movement in August 1942, five months after Jamnalalji's death, Kamalnayan's wife Savitridevi and Jamnalalji's third daughter Umadevi and son Ramkrishna were imprisoned for participating in the movement. Kamalnayan, however, chose not to court imprisonment so that he could remain free to render assistance to the freedom fighters, especially those who had gone 'underground'. One of the many tasks he undertook was to organise legal defence for the freedom fighters—Jamnalalji's nephew Radhakrishna Bajaj was one of them—who were falsely implicated by the Government in the Wardha, Chimur and Ashti sabotage cases and were faced with severe penalties including the death sentence. Several other members of the family were also imprisoned for participating in the freedom movement.

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History furnishes few examples of such depths of tender filial love on the one side and paternal affection on the other in two persons who offered themselves to each other as son and

father. In the following pages are reproduced a number of letters which passed between these two great souls during a period of over two decades of stress and strife, and constructive endeavour to regenerate a nation fallen into the depths of degradation. They form an essential part of the history of the freedom struggle in India in which both of them played a prominent part. They also reveal the strivings after personal perfection of an earnest soul in the midst of these hectic activities and the manner in which his spiritual mentor illumined and guided his path.

A selection of letters addressed by Gandhiji to Jamnalalji's wife and children has also been included in this volume. In adopting Jamnalalji as his son, Gandhiji adopted his family too as his own. They, in turn, looked upon Gandhiji as the head of the family and treated him with reverence and intimacy as children normally do. They did not hesitate to joke, argue or even quarrel with him as the occasion demanded. These letters show the paternal concern which Gandhiji had for their upbringing and well-being and reveal another aspect of Gandhiji's personality with his sparkling humour no less than his boundless humanity.

U. S. MOHAN RAO

PART 1

LETTERS BETWEEN

**MAHATMA GANDHI
AND
JAMNALAL BAJAJ**

1. *From GANDHIJI*¹

MOTIHARI,
Shravan Shukla
[July 1917]

SUJNA BHAI SHREE JAMNALALJI,

Your letter and hundi for Rs. 1,500 are received. I am indebted. Your donation will be utilised only for the propagation of Hindi teaching. If anyone else sends a donation earmarked for this work only, and some amount is left over out of your donation, it will be spent for other work also. If I have to come to Wardha again I shall intimate to you.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

2. *From GANDHIJI*

SABARMATI,
Magh Krishna
[March 1918]

SUJNA BHAI SHRI,

I have received your letter. My visit to Nagpur has been postponed. At present the work here is taking every moment of my time. The workers' strike is continuing and so is the Government's tyranny over the peasants in Kheda. Both the burdens are heavy.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

3. *From GANDHIJI*

SABARMATI,
Jyesta Shukla 10 (1975)
[June 19, 1918]

BHAI SHREE ^{5²} JAMNALALJI,

I insisted on paying my railway fare to your clerk. Unless I did so, I would not feel free to get other work done through you without hesitation.

¹ This is the first letter from Gandhiji to Jamnalal Bajaj available.

² Five times 'Shree', a respectful form of address according to Gujarat custom.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

I looked into the building account¹ on my arrival here. Rs. 28,000 have been received by way of donations so far, while the expenditure already incurred amounts to Rs. 40,000, which has been met from funds earmarked for other activities of the Ashram. What I badly need at present is money for the building work. The estimated expenditure is one lakh of rupees. You may please send me a contribution for this purpose, if you feel inclined to do so.

VANDE MATARAM FROM MOHANDAS

P. S.—This is more essential than your offer to meet my travelling expenses.

MOHANDAS

4. *From GANDHIJI*

NADIAD,
Ashad Shukla 10 (1975)
[July 18, 1918]

SUJNA BHAI SHREE JAMNALALJI,

I returned from Bombay last night. As I was constantly on the move I was not able to write to you earlier. Your letter has relieved me of all anxiety. Bhai Ambalalji has sent me Rs. 5,000, and Bhai Shankerlal Banker has given Rs. 4,000. I do feel a certain amount of hesitation in placing my needs before friends who do not disregard my wishes; all the same I cannot help approaching them. I should, therefore, like to tell you in all earnestness that whenever there is any embarrassment likely to be caused by a response to my appeal, a refusal will, indeed, be a favour to me.

I hope you have completely recovered by now from your recent illness.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

¹ Building for the Sabarmati Ashram.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

5. *From GANDHIJI*

NADIAD,
Ashad Krishna 4 (1975)
[July 27, 1918]

BHAI SHREE JAMNALALJI,

Your affection overwhelms me. I only pray to God to make me worthy of this abundance of love. I hope your devotion will always advance you on the path of righteousness.

The work of spreading education in Marwad, to be successful, requires some efficient organizers.

The recruiting campaign¹ is making very slow progress. About 150 names have been registered. No one has yet been called up. I am trying to raise a battalion of Gujaratis.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

6. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ²*

NADIAD,
Bhadra Shukla 12 (1977)
[September 24, 1920]

PUJYA SHREE BAPUJI,

Respectful *pranams*. I hope your health is now better. You will kindly let me know when you expect to go to Bombay and what will be your programme thereafter.

I have just sent a telegram to you at the instance of Dr. Moonje of Nagpur. He has left for Pondicherry to prevail upon, if possible, Shri Aurobindo Ghose to accept the presidency of the Nagpur session of the Congress. I have requested you, in my telegram, to wire to Shri Aurobindo in support of this move, if it commends itself to you. It is likely that you have wired to him before this letter reaches you. Kindly let me know who, in your opinion, is the fittest person to preside over the coming session.

Dr. Moonje also conveyed to me the desire of some friends to elect me as the Chairman of the Reception Committee, and

¹ During World War I, Gandhiji was for some time carrying on work for recruitment to the Army in the Kheda district.

² This is the first letter from Jamnalal Bajaj to Gandhiji available in the files.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

wanted to know my reaction to the proposal. I told him I did not consider myself worthy of this high office; for, in the first place, my education is very limited; and, secondly, I lack the age as well as the experience required for the Chairmanship. Dr. Moonje said in reply that I could deliver my speech in Hindi as Swami Shraddhanandji did when he was Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress session in Delhi in 1918. "The Hindi speech will be quite a good one," Dr. Moonje added. He then advanced another argument in favour of my election : "The trading class in this province is fighting shy of politics out of fear. The Marwadis, in particular, are prepared to make monetary contributions, but are reluctant to come forward. Your acceptance of the chairmanship of the Reception Committee will have a very salutary effect on the trading class who will shed their fear and will begin to take a prominent part in public life." Such are the arguments advanced by him and other friends.

My mind does not tell me that I am fit for this office. I have in mind Shri Shuklaji. But he wishes to stand for the Council elections. He has no faith, as yet, in non-co-operation.

You will kindly take all these factors into consideration and advise me as to the proper course for me to follow. On receipt of your letter I will give the most earnest thought to your instructions. The letter should reach me by the 29th instant. If it is not likely to reach here by that date, kindly send me your opinion by telegram—provided, of course, you think it proper to do so.

Yours,
JAMNALAL BAJAJ

7. From *GANDHIJI*

[TELEGRAM]

AHMEDABAD,
September 27, 1920

JAMNALAL BACHHRAJ,
WARDHAGANJ

If Shuklaji does not accept you may accept.

—Gandhi

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

8. *From MAHADEV DESAI*

ASHRAM,

September 27, 1920

PRIYA BHAI SAHEB,

Mahatmaji and I have received your letter. A telegram has been sent to you. Bapuji has given you his consent to accept the chairmanship, the main reason for which is that it is not desirable that an unfit person should occupy this position. Your arguments about age and ignorance (lack of education) are not acceptable to him. There was only one reason that weighed with him: the atmosphere there may not probably be pure enough for you. But under the present state of affairs, even that has to be put up with. Bapuji thinks that you can certainly prepare your speech in Hindi and then get it well translated into English and have it distributed at the gate.

With *pranams*,

Yours,

MAHADEV DESAI

9. *From GANDHIJI¹*

SABARMATI CENTRAL PRISON,

Thursday Night,

[March 16, 1922]²

CHI. JAMNALAL,

As I proceed in my search for truth it grows upon me that Truth comprehends everything. It is not in *ahimsa*, but *ahimsa* is in it. What is perceived by a pure heart and intellect is truth for that moment. Cling to it, and it enables one to reach pure Truth. There is no question there of divided duty. But often enough it is difficult to decide what is *ahimsa*. For instance, the use of disinfectants is *himsa*, and yet we cannot do without it. We have to live a life of *ahimsa* in the midst of a world of *himsa*, and that is possible only if we cling to truth. That is how I

¹ The translation of this letter which was originally written in Gujarati appeared in the *Harijan* of 22-2-1942.

² The letter bears the signature of the jail authority indicating that it was seen and passed by him on 17-3-1922. It was written by Gandhiji as an undertrial prisoner soon after his arrest.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

deduce *ahimsa* from truth. Out of truth emanate love, tenderness, humility. A votary of truth has to be humble as the dust. His humility increases with his observance of truth. I see this every moment of my life. I have a much vivider sense of truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago. The wonderful implication of the great truth '*Brahma Satyam Jaganmithya*' (Brahama is real, all else unreal) grows on me from day to day. It teaches us patience. This will purge us of harshness and add to our tolerance. It will make us magnify the mole-hills of our errors into mountains and minimise the mountains of others' errors into mole hills. The body persists because of egoism. The utter extinction of the body of egoism is *moksha*. He who has achieved this will be the very image of Truth, or one may call it Brahman. Therefore the loving name of God is *Dasanudasa* (Servant of Servants).

Wife, children, friends, possessions—all should be held subservient to Truth. Each one of these should be sacrificed in the search for Truth. Only then can one be a satyagrahi. I have thrown myself into this movement with a view to making the observance of this principle comparatively easy, and it is with the same object that I do not hesitate to plunge men like you in it. Its outward form is Hind Swaraj. This Swaraj is being delayed because there is yet to be found a satyagrahi of that type. This however, need not dismay us. It should spur us on to greater effort.

You have made yourself my fifth son. But I am striving to be worthy. It is not an ordinary responsibility for an adopter. May God help me, and may I be worthy of it in this very life.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

10. From GANDHIJI

SABARMATI JAIL
March 18, 1922

BHAI JAMNALAL,

Speaking purely from an economic point of view, I venture to say that unless the merchants dealing in foreign yarn and cloth give up their trade, and the people get rid of their infatuation for foreign cloth, the greatest disease of the country, viz., starvation,

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

can never be cured. I hope all the merchants will make the fullest contribution to the propagation of khadi and the spinning-wheel.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

11. *From GANDHIJI¹*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
Ashwin Shukla 14, Thursday (1979)

[October 5, 1922]

(I send this letter with the permission of the Superintendent)
CHI. JAMNALAL,

* * *

As for your spiritual aspirations:

A man who frees himself from impure thoughts attains salvation. The total elimination of impure thoughts is possible only as a result of much *tapasya*. There is only one way to achieve it. Whenever an impure thought arises in the mind, it should at once be confronted with a pure one. This, again, is possible only with the grace of God. That grace can be obtained by repeating His name all the twenty-four hours and by realising that He resides within us. It does not matter if *Ramanama* remains on the lips while other thoughts fill the mind. *Ramanama* should be repeated with such concentrated effort that what has remained on the lips so far, comes, in the course of time, to occupy the first place in the heart. Again, however hard the mind may try, it should not be given control over a single sense-organ. A man, who allows his senses to drift wherever the mind chooses to drag them, must meet with destruction in the end. But so long as one keeps the sense-organs, even forcibly, under self-control, one can hope some day to gain mastery over impure thoughts. I know, if even today I leave my senses free to follow my thoughts, I should perish this very day. The rise of impure thoughts in the mind should be no reason for us to be depressed; it should, on the contrary, inspire greater zeal in us. The

¹ This has been taken from the Daily Prayer Book of Jamnalal Bajaj in which he had copied it down.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

field of endeavour has been wholly placed at our disposal, while the field of results has been reserved by God in His own hands. You need not, therefore, worry about the result. Again, whenever an impure thought arises in the mind, you should also remind yourself that you are proving disloyal to Jankibai, and that a godly husband would never be disloyal to his wife. You are, without doubt, godly. The ordinary recipes are, of course, known to you. One should be sparing in diet. While walking, the eyesight should be fixed to the ground in front of one. If the eye is inclined to cast a lustful glance, one should be angry with it almost to the extent of plucking it out. There should be a constant reading of sacred books. May God protect you in every way.

Shubhechhuk
BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

12. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
Kartik shudh 5, (1979)
Wednesday [October 25, 1922]

PUJYÁ SHREE BAPUJI,

Respectful *pranams*. Your letter duly reached me (though the address was incorrect). Ramdas and Pujya Ba liked the suggestion you conveyed to them through the letter and they will act up to it. I went to the Ashram for a couple of days, and had full and frank talks with them. Herewith enclosed is a letter from Bhai Ramdas which will give you a complete idea of the situation. Pujya Maganlalbhai and myself are of the opinion that Ramdas should, for the present, stay at the Ashram and learn spinning, carding and weaving, in the first instance; and that afterwards he may stay wherever he likes. I hope we shall succeed in persuading him to adopt this course.

As regards myself I will carry out the instructions you have conveyed to me, and I am sure I shall benefit thereby. But my present state of mind makes me ashamed of myself; and I ask myself what right I had to become your son. Though I did cast the burden on you, the responsibility in fact is mine. I shall

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

regain my peace of mind only when, as a result of your blessings, God gives me the necessary strength. If the mind goes astray when I am away from home, it has to be curbed forcibly, if only out of a fear of disgrace. But I aspire to achieve a state of mind wherein I may always be free from passion even when I am at home. At present, however, this seems a thing most difficult to achieve. But as faith in God increases, some day there is bound to be a revulsion against these carnal thoughts. I would urge you kindly not to worry about this. Your sacred blessings will enable me to achieve success in the hardest of undertakings.

Pray accept the *pranams* from Pujya Maganbhai, Vinoba and others. I have conveyed your message to Vinoba who promises to try to live up to it. The messages for others, in respect of their health and other matters, have been duly conveyed to the persons concerned. Pray accept the *pranams* of Kamala's mother¹ and the children. Kindly convey my loving regards to Shri Shankerlalbhai. I am indeed jealous of his good fortune, and am going to have a quarrel with him when he comes out. The activities at both the Ashrams² are going on satisfactorily.

Yours,
JAMNALAL

13. From GANDHIJI

SATURDAY
[Replied on April 6, 1924]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It is good that you gave up the idea of going to Kanpur. Have you still any other complaint besides weakness?

You know the Chinchwad institution. There is a good deal of opposition to them. They are always hard pressed for money. I feel that it is necessary to help them. I am considering how it can be done. Their total requirement is Rs. 15,000. If they receive this amount, no further aid will be needed; they are prepared to give an assurance that they will not ask for any. If your

¹ Jankidevi, wife of Jamnalal Bajaj.

² Sabarmati and Wardha.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

experience of them is the same as mine—that they are deserving help—and if you can extend it, I wish you to do it.

Rajagopalachari has got asthma again. I think that the Nasik climate will suit him. If it is convenient to you, write to him at Salem inviting him to stay with you for some time. He has been having treatment by an Ayurvedic Vaidya from Poona who too could then examine him. I have in fact written to him saying it would be good if he were to go to Nasik and stay with you while you are there.

You may be knowing that Vallabhbhai's Manibehn, Maganlal's Radha and Prof. Kripalani's Kikibehn have started taking treatment from the same Vaidya. It was Devadas who urged them to do this. Let me know what is your experience of this Vaidya.

Malaviyaji left Kashi yesterday. We had some talk about the Hindu-Muslim Problem. Hakimji¹ had come here. He too talked on the same subject. Motilalji who is here will stay on. He has been discussing about the Council.² I have been pondering over all this.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

14. *From GANDHIJI*

PALM BUN,
JUHU,
P. O. ANDHERI,
Sunday, [May-June 1924]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your grief has made me sad. I avoided the use of *Chi*.³ in the letter to you because it was not closed; and because I could

¹ Hakim Ajmal Khan.

² There were strong differences of opinion among the top leaders of the Congress on the question whether Congressmen should contest elections to enter the Legislative Councils, which the Congress had earlier decided to boycott. This later led to the formation of two groups—one the 'no changers' prominent among whom were C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad and Jamnalal Bajaj, and the 'changers' led by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das.

³ Although Gandhiji after adopting Jamnalalji as his son always addressed him as *Chi* in his letters, in one letter which was sent open he addressed

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

not decide on the spur of the moment as to the propriety or otherwise of the prefix *Chi*. as applied to you being read by all those who happened to see the letter. I used the prefix *Bhai* (literally, 'brother'). How are we to arrive at a decision as to whether you deserve to be *Chi*¹ and whether I deserve to be adopted as father? Just as you have misgivings about yourself, I have similar misgivings about my own self. If you are imperfect, so am I. I ought to have given more thought to my own qualifications before allowing myself to be adopted as father. I have, however, yielded to your affection and have taken the place of your father. May God make me worthy of that privilege. If any defects or deficiencies persist in you, it will be a reflection of my own shortcoming. I am confident that both of us will achieve success in our effort to remove our shortcomings. If, however, we fail, God, who wants in us a spirit of dedication and can look into the inmost recesses of the heart, will deal with us according to our deserts. I will, therefore, consider you as *Chi*. so long as I do not deliberately harbour impurity within myself.

I shall be silent today till one in the afternoon. Pandit Sunderlal has been given an appointment for six in the evening. I will wire to you if, after seeing him, it seems necessary to call you here.

The climate there, I hope, is suitable. Manibehn has gone to Hajira. Radha can be said to have made much progress. Kikibehn too is better.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

him as 'Bhai Jamnalalji'. Jamnalalji was very much pained at this and complained about it to Gandhiji.

The significance of *Chi*. has been thus explained by Gandhiji himself in another context: "It stands for *Chiranjivi* meaning 'long-lived'. That is the blessing which an elder prefixes to the names of the younger members of his family."—*Bapu's Letters to Mira*, P. 15. It may be mentioned here that in later years, particularly from 1930 onwards, Gandhiji used the prefix *Chi*. much more freely than before.

¹ See letter No. 9.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

15. *From GANDHIJI*

SABARMATI,

September, 1924

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have got your telegram as also your letter. During the visits to Bombay, Poona and Surat there was not a moment to spare for writing. I reached the Ashram only this morning.

The report of your injury¹ caused me not the slightest grief. I believe that many like us may have to lay down our lives. The poison has spread so widely and dishonesty is rampant on so large a scale that we cannot hope to be saved from this catastrophe without the sacrifice of some of the purest men from amongst us. You will try to find, if possible, the root cause of the quarrel. Are there no sensible men among the Mussalmans or the Hindus who would take a right view of things and remove the causes of tension?

You will have understood, I hope, my latest decisions. I have made up my mind not to decide any important matter by votes at Belgaum.² The mutual bickerings have assumed such large proportions that we must give up for the time being any idea of large-scale satyagraha. Our failure to do so will prove to be our undoing. Not a single thing is correctly understood. Everything misrepresented; distrust all around. It is up to us under the present circumstances to adhere to our principles and be silent witnesses of the actions of others. I have dealt with this subject at length in *Young India*. I do not, however, know how much of it has been translated for *Navajivan*.

Your hand will have been completely cured by this time.

I am here until a telegram or a letter is received from Maulana Mohamed Ali summoning me to Delhi.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ The reference is to an injury caused to Jamnalalji during the Hindu-Muslim riots at Nagpur. He was passing in a tonga, and on seeing a riot in progress, he alighted to pacify the crowd. A flying stone injured his left hand, and he had to be taken to the hospital for treatment.

² The Belgaum session of the Congress in 1924, the only session over which Gandhiji presided.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

16. From GANDHIJI

Bhadrapad Shukla 12 (1980)
[September 10, 1924]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hope your hand has now been completely cured. You will have received my previous letter.

There have been a number of changes occurring in my mind. A complete picture of these will appear in the coming issue of *Young India*. It seems to me just now that we ought not to get a majority in the Congress by dividing the House. If at Belgaum we do not find the circumstances favourable for working from inside the Congress, we ought to go out and carry on our activities to the best of our ability. I see clearly that there is no other way to root out the poison which has spread over at present. I am sure we will somehow overcome it.

I am expecting a telegram calling me to Delhi. If I have to go there, there is likelihood of some solution being found for the Hindu-Muslim tangle. I have not yet come to know the causes of the recent riot there.

I have just gone through the speeches of Ghatwai. If the reports are correct, my congratulations to him were misplaced. The utterances do not breathe non-violence.

It is good that Balkrishna has arrived there. As he wishes to stay there, he has my permission to do so. Please give the enclosed letter to him. Will you too come here in October?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

17. From GANDHIJI

SHANTINIKETAN,
Jyaistha Sudi 7
[May 29, 1925]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have received your letter. I had deferred writing as I thought that you would be coming for the Committee meeting and then we could discuss everything. I am not worried that you did not come, [although] I had taken for granted from Giridhari's letter that you would definitely come.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

I have been very much on the look out for a suitable person for the College,¹ but I have not sighted anyone as yet. If Jugal Kishore were to come, the problem would be solved in a way. He is indeed a man of character. I was not fully satisfied with his letter on Gidwani. If Gidwani himself wishes to and is actually able to come, it would be very good indeed. I have none else in view at present. No doubt it would be best if someone from the South were available.

Should the inaugural ceremony of the College be performed only in the month of June ? I shall be spending the last part of June in Assam. Immediately thereafter, I must go to Bihar. If, however, I must visit Wardha immediately, I shall come there first and go to Bihar later. One month will be spent in Bihar. Ever since people heard about my going to Wardha, I am being asked to visit other places also. There are letters from Nagpur, Amaravati and Akola. I feel it proper to go wherever I am invited. I regard it as my duty to tour during this year. In case I do that I would like you to draw up the itinerary of my C. P. tour; and perhaps it would be fitting if you could accompany me.

- (1) When should I visit Wardha ?
- (2) Should I tour the C. P. or not ?
- (3) If I should, would you draw up the itinerary ? Will you accompany me ?

Please let me know.

I do not see any possibility at present of my coming to the Ashram. Immediately after Bengal, I have to go to Bihar, the C. P., etc. I can come there only after that is done. By then, it will perhaps be the month of September.

The Working Committee did not meet at all because only three members were present, Jawaharlal, Dr. Naidu and myself. Aney was to come, but did not. Ajmer, therefore, could not be considered. However, if you can manage it, do come and see me about the matter; but we need not worry about it. I am myself going to write to Arjunlalji asking him to tell me what he wants to say.

¹ Gujarat Vidyapeeth.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

I hope all of you there are keeping good health. I am keeping fit. Today, Saturday, I am in Bolpur, and shall be here till Monday. On Tuesday I shall visit Calcutta and from there I shall proceed to Darjeeling for three days. I shall send you the subsequent programme after it is decided today or tomorrow.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

18. From MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 24, 1925

MURABBI JAMNALAJI,

You will be grieved to learn that Bapu has commenced today a seven days' fast as a penance for the impurity of school boys in the Ashram. The evil was known to have existed for some time past; but Bapu discovered only just now that it was prevalent on such a wide scale, and that all except two or three boys had fallen victims to it. All of them have confessed.

I would not enter into a discussion with you about the meaning of the fast or its propriety. I am writing this under Bapu's instructions just to tell you of his keen desire that you should not rush to Sabarmati on hearing of the fast.

Herewith enclosed is a letter from Lakshmidasbhai. You will please give thought to the suggestion made in it.

SEVAK MAHADEV'S PRANAM

19. From MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 1, 1925

MURABBI JAMNALAJI,

You have been informed by wire of the breaking of the fast by Bapu this morning. His health is good in spite of physical weakness. The fast was ended in the following manner:

It was broken at 7-30 in the morning. The function began with prayers, in the course of which Imam Saheb read passages from the Quran and explained their meaning. He was followed by Miss Slade—I hope you know that she has been given the name 'Mirabehn'—who sang the hymn, 'Lead kindly light'. In the end Balkoba recited verses from the Upanishads and the Gita,

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

and explained the purport thereof. The subject dealt with in these verses was the distinction between the carnal desires (*vishayatma*) and reason (*manasatma*), and between the intelligence (*mahatma*) and the passionless state (*shantatma*). Bapu then spoke in slow, moving accents a few words charged with grief and affection. The following is a gist of what he said:

"After much thinking and searching of heart I am convinced that my fasting was not erroneous. It may be that I am unable to see my error; but why should I not be able to see it? Am I full of passion, perversity, or impurity? Have I never had a glimpse of Truth? If I have any passionate desire, it is only to reach God, if possible, at a jump and to merge myself in Him. God is Truth. Impurity I have shaken off. Why should I then be unable to see my error, if there is any?

"I have built very high hopes upon the Ashram. It has been my ambition that the Ashram will respond when the whole world is asleep, as happened in the case of Phoenix in South Africa.

"But how is that hope to be fulfilled? Only if the foundation of character is strong and there is perfect purity among the inmates. A seven days' fast is of no account for this purpose. A similar fast—even a longer one—may have to be undertaken in the future. Perhaps even a fast for an indefinite period may be necessary. Fasting can be avoided altogether only if I run away to a forest. But why should I flee to a forest? For, though Vaishya by birth, I am by action a Sudra, a Kshatriya and a Brahman, and I aspire to be a passionless soul (*shantatma*)". Etc. etc. The gathering dispersed after this.

The school prayer was held at 6.30 a.m. The words addressed to the children were inaudible, because Bapu had lost his voice. The gist, however, was that the boys should shape their conduct with Balkoba and Surendra as their models, and should work for 24 hours if it was possible for them to do so.

How am I to describe the scene during the hour that followed? It was more sanctifying, more grave, and more moving than the hour when the 21 days' fast was broken. Bapu's voice

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

was choked. Though it was seven o'clock, he somehow did not feel like breaking the fast, somehow he had no inclination to take food. He lay quiet for a while engrossed in deep, unfathomable thought, writhing in indescribable anguish of the soul. Then he called Devadas to his side, and asked him to recite the *Sthitaprajna* verses.¹ After the recitation was over, he again lay quiet. When at 7.40, at last, he steadied himself, and asked for grape and orange juice for breaking the fast, all of us heaved a sigh of relief.

His health appears to be good today. He does not seem to be much fatigued in spite of the great deal of work he has put in during the day. Speaking he has reduced to the minimum possible. Tomorrow he will shift to Sheth Ambalal's bungalow at Shahibag for a couple of days' quiet rest.

SEVAK MAHADEV HARIBHAI DESAI

20. From MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 4, 1925

MURABBI BHAISHREE,

I had shown your telegram to Bapu. He said that the suggestion regarding Dumas¹ must have come from Shankerlal. I had no knowledge about it. Shankerlal strongly pleaded that Bapu should go to Dumas. But I told Bapu that I would prefer going to Wardha for your sake and for the sake of *pujya* Vinoba's company. On that Bapu said, "Nobody will give me so much peace as Jamnalalji and Vinoba." He then asked me to send you the telegram as I have sent you earlier today. Bapu says that we should reach Wardha if possible on the 9th itself, without stopping at Bombay even for a day.

I leave it to you to make arrangements for Bapu's stay there. You are the best judge as to where he would get the maximum rest and peace, as well as Vinoba's company. It is now definite that we will be coming there.

¹ Verses 64 to 72 of the second chapter of the *Bhagavadgita*, recited as part of the evening prayer at the Ashram.

¹ A health resort on the west coast of India.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Hope you are doing well. Bapu is staying at Ambalalbhai's place these days. He will be returning to the Ashram tomorrow. His health is progressing satisfactorily.

SNEHADHIN MAHADEV'S PRANAM

21. *From GANDHIJI*

Monday,

[December 4, 1925]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Vinoba was telling me that you thought I would be worried by the fasts here. I was not worried in the least. Not only that, they gave me joy. The fast undertaken by Shri Bhansali was purely for his own satisfaction. He is at present doing great penance. Shri Kishorelal's fast was purely personal, meant for remedying his own defects. Maganlal's was for the sake of expiation. And that was only proper. — had deceived him. He had no means except to inflict suffering on himself. This has had a salutary effect on that family. All the three, Kishorelal, Bhansali and Maganlal, are well. I have now no cause for anxiety over this.

I am keeping well. I now take four pounds of milk and eat eight biscuits made by Jamnabehn. I take walks regularly. You should not, therefore, worry about me in the least.

I am enclosing Chi. Mani's letter for your persual. You need not return it to me.

Is there still no news about Kamala's marriage ?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

22. *From GANDHIJI*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Monday,

[Replied from Delhi, March 19, 1926]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have been very much agitated today regarding Mussoorie. I just don't feel like going there or anywhere else. My health does not need change of climate. I need rest which I am getting all right. I can attend to some work here, and that serves me as medicine. There are many reasons for my not leaving the

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Ashram. My leaving the Ashram may prove harmful. Therefore, if after fully understanding all the implications you can free me, I do wish to be relieved. If you think that I must go to Mussoorie, I shall certainly do that. I, however, thought it proper to write to you about the mental anguish I felt today. I shall discuss the matter with Shankarlal also.

Satishbabu arrived yesterday. Dr. Suresh will come on Saturday.

Manibehn does not want to stay with you people. She wants to improve her Gujarati. Hence Madalsa will have to stay with Jankibehn. She will automatically pick up a lot if she stays long enough in the Ashram.

Report to me on the Kanya Gurukul after examining it in detail. Let me also know the number of girls in it.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

23. From MAHADEV DESAI

NAVAJIVAN,
SARANGPUR, AHMEDABAD,
April 30, 1926

PRIYA JAMNALALJI,

.....Bupu's going to Finland is uncertain. He has communicated his assent, but has made several conditions. If they are accepted, it is likely that he will go. The conditions are that he would retain his usual dress with such changes as might be necessary to suit the climate. His diet would be goat's milk and fruits. He would not make speeches, but would have talks with the students. The persons who have invited him will have to make all arrangements in connection with the passport, without any conditions attached to it. If they accept all these, Bapu will go. Their reply has not yet been received.

SNEHADHIN SEVAK MAHADEV'S PRANAM

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

24. *From GANDHIJI*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Asadha Sudi 6, Friday,
[July 16, 1926]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The land which we had intended to buy from Joshi Girjashankar may have been purchased by now. All told the land is 19 bighas. Out of this he will retain one bigha situated at the end. We shall be able to buy 18 bighas and the building for Rs. 21,000. He or a tenant, if he happens to have one, can draw water from our well. If he sells this bigha of land, use of water will be stopped. Before the land is sold we shall have the choice to buy it at the price assessed by a body of five. A sum of Rs. 5,000 has to be paid as earnest money and the balance of Rs. 16,000 within a month. It has not been decided in whose name the land is to be bought. I have three proposals in mind : in the name of the Ashram; on *goraksha* account; in your name. If you think of buying it yourself, you may certainly do so. I feel like buying it in the name of the Ashram and use it either for the dairy or the tannery as necessary. Or the dairy, tannery, etc. may be housed on some other land of the Ashram and this land may be used for residential and agricultural purposes. There is a great shortage of houses at present. But in whatever manner this land is bought, you have to provide the funds for it.

If you can, meet Jugalkishoreji and Ghanshyamdasji in this connection. It seems that a few more buildings will have to be built after the monsoon. Please send me a telegram as to what is to be done about the money and in whose name the title deed is to be registered. It is raining heavily here. There are floods almost every day.

Find out, if possible, the reasons why the conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims there is on the increase. Write to me in detail.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

25. From GANDHIJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Ashad Krishna 6,
[July 16, 1926]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have read your letter to Devadas. I had not expected the storm that has come upon you. It is, however, welcome, for it is only on occasions like this that one's faith is put to test. You will send me the indictment when you receive it. I will draft a reply to it, which you may send on with such alterations as you feel like making. Anyway, we are going to show the fullest courtesy. The caste has every right to excommunicate a person who commits a breach of its regulations. There is nothing, however, in all that you have done so far for which you need feel ashamed or repentant. No doubt your influence with the caste will suffer a setback, and your capacity to collect funds will decrease; that, however, does not worry me in the least. It should not be a matter for sorrow or regret even if you have to be a pauper as a result of this development. Pauperism, if it comes in consequence of adherence to principles that are dear to us, deserves to be welcomed. When ultimately the caste recognises your firmness as also your courtesy, it will relent and be humble. Castes will necessarily have to undergo reform; and it is likely that this event will pave the way for it.

A further sum of Rs. 8,000 has got to be sent to Anna for the purchase of a printing press. He came here to see me, and I feel that he should be given the amount to enable him to purchase a press. If Ghanshyamdas has not yet sent another instalment of Rs. 5,000, you will please send him a reminder; and the sum, when received, may be passed on to Anna, with the addition of another sum of Rs. 3,000 which may be deducted from the next month's quota.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

26. *From GANDHIJI*

SABARMATI

Kartik Vad,

[November 21, 1926]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Received your letter. May you live long and may your purity of character grow. In this world there is none who is free from imperfection. We can only strive to get rid of it. You are already making efforts in that direction. A person who makes an honest effort knows no fall. This is the divine pledge.

We will now be meeting on the 4th. I am intending to come via Tapti Valley. Shastriar is reaching tomorrow.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

27. *From GANDHIJI*

DAY OF SILENCE,

Pausa Sud 14

[January 1, 1927]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have received your letter. A telegram has been sent to you regarding the *bhandars* at Gondia and Amaravati. If I have to visit Gondia, I shall be able to go there. I have to leave Patna on the night of the 31st. I shall take the Bombay Mail at Mughalsarai on the 1st. The same day I shall reach Jabalpur, so that I may reach Gondia on the 2nd. I shall definitely get the Bhusaval train on the 2nd morning.

Now about Manilal. I have written a letter to Kishorelal regarding the matter and I have asked him to show it to you. My suggestion for the present is that Gomati or Vijayalakshmi should ask Sushila, without mentioning names, whether she intends to marry or not. I see from Kishorelal's letter that no girl seems to be prepared to marry as yet. If that is so, why should we tempt them? Kishorelal believes that if anyone is ready, it is probably Sushila. It seems, therefore, that we should go ahead after knowing her mind about marriage. Meanwhile, I shall definitely come that side. The picture will then be clearer.

Though Jankibehn's piles trouble has somewhat subsided, the

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

proper thing to do is to have her examined by a doctor and abide by his instructions. I wish that you should not delay taking her to the doctor.

I hope Vinoba is in good health. I would like to know about Shivaji's health also.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

28. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Shri Hari

WARDHA

Pausa Badi 13/85

[January 8, 1929]

PUJYA SHRI BAPUJI,

All of us reached this place yesterday evening. Dr. Col. Chopra diagnosed Chi. Kamal's ailment as malaria and chronic dysentery. He wanted to start treatment by injections, but you had put a ban on injections. Now, one of the alternatives is to get him treated here. The other alternative is, as advised by you, to take him to some place in Madras province for treatment. My only fear is that if he gets fever, etc. there, we will be worried about it and will be putting others to inconvenience.

You will be seeing the resolutions passed by the Congress Working Committee. The prohibition Committee consists of Shri C. Rajagopalachari and Shri Jairamdas.

The untouchability Eradication Committee consists of Shri C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Babu and myself. The work of organising boycott of foreign cloth has been entrusted to you, and that of organising the Congress has been entrusted to Shri Panditji [Motilal Nehru], Jawaharlal and myself.

Swayam Sevak Dal : Shri Jawaharlal.

The Rajputana Congress Committee has been superseded. It has been decided to hold fresh elections under the supervision of an observer nominated by Shri Motilalji.

Working Treasurer : The Working Committee has appointed me as the Working Treasurer of the Congress. If you think it proper kindly write to Rewashankarbhai explaining to him the circumstances under which I was obliged to accept this responsi-

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

bility, so that there may not be any misunderstanding in his mind.

I met Bhai Jawaharlalji in Calcutta to discuss the matter relating to the U.P. agency of the Charkha Sangh. For the time being the agency may continue in his name and he will extend all possible help in the matter. Shri Kripalanji may continue as Organiser. A telegram to this effect had been sent to Bhai Shankarlalji. A detailed letter has also been sent to him today. During the course of the talk on the Agency we also discussed the Independence League. From what he said I gathered that he was a bit dissatisfied with this party. I explained to him in brief the type of persons who had joined him and the reasons why they were working with him. On hearing this, he said that after going to Allahabad he would give further thought to the matter.

I had discussion with Shri Ghanshyamdasji also. He said it will not be convenient for him to give the promised sum of Rupees one lakh in one lump sum. He can give Rs. 30,000 in January, Rs. 20,000 in February, Rs. 25,000 in March and Rs. 25,000 in April. I have brought Rs. 30,000 promised for January. I will deposit this amount in the account of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. As has been already decided, Rs. 15,000 out of this will be given to Shri Gandhi Ashram, Meerut, through the Charkha Sangh and the remaining Rs. 15,000 will be earmarked for propagating khadi in Rajputana. Rs. 20,000 to be sent by him in February, will also be deposited in the same account. The remaining Rs. 50,000 will be either deposited in the account of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and spent as desired by you or it will be deposited in the account of the Satyagraha Ashram. We shall act according to your instructions in this regard.

With pranams,
JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

29. *From GANDHIJI*

BORSAD,

May 8, 1931

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Please ask the people of Karnataka to participate in the constructive work as enthusiastically as they had participated in the [freedom] struggle. A lot remains to be done regarding Khaddar—the boycott of foreign cloth is only for the sake of Khaddar. If service of the poor were not the object of the boycott, I at least would not have been able to identify myself with it as much as I am today.

Some of the Karnataka brothers are very anxious to have a separate province of Karnataka. Why should they be worried? The Congress already has a separate province for the Kannada speaking people, and under Swarajya things will remain the same.

It is a matter of gratification that the Lingayats and others are all united; that is as it should be.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

30. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹*

August 10, 1931

PUJYA SHREE BAPUJI,

I had a talk with you about three ladies who are absconders and are reported to be in a pitiable condition. I now reduce it to writing in the form of questions and answers, and you will kindly revise it for me.

Q. 1—Are you prepared to harbour in the Ashram all the three ladies or as many of them as would choose to come here?

A. —Yes, I am willing to harbour them in the Ashram. Only they should correctly understand my views before coming.

Q. 2—What are your views?

A. —It will be my first duty, immediately on their arrival at the Ashram, to send an intimation to the Government

¹ The original of this letter does not bear the signature of Jamnalal Bajaj. It only contains Gandhiji's signature confirming that the contents of the draft are correct.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

giving the names and antecedents of these ladies.

Q. 3—If you inform the Government, they will immediately arrest the ladies and prosecute them.

A. —Yes, possibly they will. The ladies must come to the Ashram prepared for this, i.e. prepared to take this risk.

Q. 4—Then what is the advantage in their seeking asylum at the Ashram?

A. —It is just possible that if I write to the Government the authorities may not proceed against them as long as they stay at the Ashram and try to shape their future conduct on the Ashram principles.

Q. 5—Will the Government not coerce them to reveal the facts relating to the offences in which they are implicated?

A. —Of course, they will want to know the facts. I will, however, tell both the Government and these ladies that the latter should admit their offences and errors without giving the name of anyone else.

Q. 6—This means that it will be better for the ladies to come here prepared to take all sorts of risks, is it not?

A. —Yes, it will be better for them to come prepared to take all sorts of risks.

[JAMNALAL]

The foregoing is correct.

August 10, 1931

MOHANDAS GANDHI

31. From GANDHIJI

AHMEDABAD

P.B. 26

August 22, 1931

CHI. JAMNALAL,

There was no time to dictate a letter to you. As I do not still strain the right hand, very little is being written. I write only to the extent I can with the left hand. You might have received the letters sent yesterday.¹ It is very necessary to find

¹ Mr. L. M. Satoor's original letter to Gandhiji and copy of Gandhiji's reply to him dated 21-8-1931 about the funds spent on anti-untouchability work.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

out the figures of expenditures incurred on untouchability by the Congress, by Congressmen, and through them or at their instance. Some figures I remember. So might you too. I want to shift this responsibility to you. Collect the figures from wherever you can get them and send them to me. If anything is then left out, I shall try to remember and fill in. I have calculated Rs. 20 lakhs. This, according to my estimate, is less, not more than the actual figure. Part of the Tilak Fund was earmarked for this purpose. You can get the figures from the accounts of the Tilak Fund which are with you.

Is there any development regarding the land in Almora? If none, I feel it is necessary to take early action, if that be possible.

How are Jankibehn and Balkrishna? There was a good deal of misunderstanding in the newspapers and all sorts of stories started appearing; so I sent a telegram to the Viceroy yesterday. No reply to it has been received. Herewith I send a copy of the telegram. Pattaniji is arriving tomorrow. I shall let you know if there is anything to report.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

32. From MAHADEV DESAI

KINGSLEY HALL,
Bow, E. 3,
September 25, 1931

MY DEAR JAMNALALJI,

Things have not moved much since I wrote to you last, except for Bapu's second speech in the Federal Services Committee which created a flutter both in the British circles and ours. Sadanand wired the speech almost in entire and you must have read it already. If not, you will see it in *Young India* to which I am sending the full text. He has had full talks with the Ruling Chiefs and has made no secret of what he wants them to do. The speech had to be of a general nature and couched in the form of an appeal because it is Bapu's way. But we had frantic telegrams from some Native States friends. The

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

other part containing a reference to the indirect form of election was not appreciated by our friends, but that there was nothing alarming or compromising in it may be seen from what Sastri said: "So he wants your wonderful Congress Constitution to serve as a pattern for the Indian Constitution."

Bapu has had a long talk with Irwin today, but I have not had a minute with him and am not likely to see him before I post this and leave for Manchester this evening. What with the Federal Services Committee, where sitting and listening to the speeches is a weariness of the flesh, and with numerous engagements, Bapu remains here busier than ever and it is sometimes impossible to have even a minute with him. He is feeling very tired and would be thankful for a little bit of rest, but I do not know when it is coming. That it is coming soon I am certain, for he is feeling quite isolated and does not have any hope of getting support from any of the parties. For instance, on the Rupee question and the statement of the Secretary of State in that behalf, he had to plough his solitary furrow. Sapru was there, Rangaswami Iyengar was there, Jinnah was there, but everyone seemed to be convinced by the persuasive eloquence of Sir Samuel Hoare. What can one expect in these circumstances?

And then the Mussalmans. He has had two most disappointing interviews with Shaukat Ali and the Aga Khan. The latter's insincerity was even patent to Shaukat Ali. Jinnah was better, but he thought Bapu would have no difficulty with his friends. He has no objection personally to Ansari, but how can we wait another fifteen days for his coming? And if you are going to concede all that the Mussalmans want, why wait for Ansari? Let him come and ratify. As though Bapu did not want really to concede anything, but was making a scape-goat of Ansari! They do not really want Ansari, and Bapu is adamant that he will do nothing over the head of Ansari. He would try and persuade Dr. Ansari to accept the Muslim demands, but if they cannot have him here he will not accept the demands on his behalf. So there seems to be very little

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

chance of success on this matter.

So far as the main question is concerned, they would try to break on the independence issue and make us look ashamed before the whole world, but Bapu is determined to have the safeguards discussed first and have independence discussed in terms of those safeguards.

He has had two meetings with the Labour M.P.s and with the M.P.s of the three parties, from the latter of which all the important Conservatives were absent. But there was a lively discussion at the end of the talk which created a good impression. Mr. Horra'bin is arranging to take him to Scarborough for the Labour Party's Conference meeting there next week, and there is to be a reception at the National Labour Club. The Labour Members—many of whom have had interviews with Bapu—are most sympathetic; the common working man has genuine regard for him and is most friendly wherever he meets him, but the middle-class Britisher's mentality is still unaffected.

With love,

Yours,
MAHADEV

33. *From MAHADEV DESAI*

88, KNIGHTSBRIDGE, S. W. 1.

November 13, 1931

MY DEAR JAMNALALJI,

Bapu has had his final talk with Sir Samuel Hoare who is now completely disillusioned about Bapu. He agreed that the provincial autonomy that Bapu was contemplating was never in his own mind; it was something synonymous with complete independence, and it was unthinkable. "We must part as friends. You will keep me informed and as I shall always have the official version I should also like to have your version of events. But today we must agree to differ." It was after that that Bapu made that smashing speech in the Minorities Committee. Even Ramsay Macdonald looked quite small under those hammer blows and for once pocketed his pride and forgot his inclination

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

to bluff and insult. It had such a thoroughly wholesome, and let us hope, cleansing effect.

But the result? Well the result is that the fellow cannot now lay the blame at our door. Read the fine article in the *New Statesman*. The editor had a talk with Bapu for an hour some days ago and he has evidently profited by the talk.

General Smuts had an interview with Bapu. He was uncommonly nice, said that Bapu had made out his case so well that it would be calamitous if he had to go away empty handed. That the Indians had proved their right to govern themselves and nothing can now be allowed to stand in the way. He offered to help too. He saw the Prime Minister twice after this, came with some communal solution which appealed to him as a good *via media* and after getting Bapu's approval to it took it to the Prime Minister. There is nothing much in it and nothing is going to come out of it, but his gushing friendliness and offer to help came as an agreeable surprise.

Several friends are trying desperately hard to bring about something—among them Wedgwood Benn, Lothian, some Church dignitaries and others. Bapu sent a telegram to Irwin today to say that as the Conference seemed to be ambling to pieces he had decided to go, unless Irwin would advise otherwise. Within an hour came a reply that he was coming to see Bapu tomorrow.

* * *

We hope to sail from Marseilles on the 27th or from Genoa on the 29th. I do hope you are not worried by the nightmare of the provincial autonomy stunt raised by the papers here to discredit Bapu. Bapu could never lend himself to anything of that kind and he has, to ease the nervousness of friends here, addressed a letter to the Prime Minister and given a long interview to the *News Chronicle*.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

34. From MAHADEV DESAI

88, KNIGHTSBRIDGE, S. W. 1.

November 13, 1931

MY DEAR JAMNALALJI,

So many stories about the Round Table Conference appear in the daily newspapers and I write in such detail about Bapu's activities outside of it in *Young India* that I have not written to you separately. I have taken it for granted that you must have been able to see some of the letters written to Vallabhbhai and Jawaharlal. The very powerful speech which Bapu made today must have appeared in the newspapers there. I am sending the whole of it for *Young India*. It may be said that only the final rites now remain of the Round Table.

Bomanji had met Bapu, Outstandings from him might amount to a lakh and half. He has now agreed to donate it to the Charkha Sangh and the Deshsevika Sangh. Do meet him positively and talk to him at length about both the institutions and familiarise him about them. He is very eager to be on their Committees. Bapu asked him to acquire the qualification needed to be on those Committees. Bapu feels that while it is impossible for him to acquire the Charkha Sangh qualification, he can be made a director in the activities of the Deshsevika Sangh. Meet him and discuss all this with him and make sure about his amount. Considering the pressure of work here, revered Bapu's health can be said to be extraordinarily good. It is quite cold here, but not a bit more than in Simla. Everyone says that this time the Indian climate has followed Bapu to England.¹

About Bapu's tour of Europe²,

MAHADEV DESAI

¹ Only this portion of the letter from Mahadev Desai is available.

² Not available.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

35. *From DEVADAS GANDHI*

88 KNIGHT'S BRIDGE, LONDON

December 2, 1931

PUJYA JAMNALALJI,

The work here has been completed. There will be a debate in the Parliament today. Tomorrow Bapuji will let the World know his own mind about it all.

Now our new task is to satisfy the Muslims. What they have done here would have got them punishment in any other country. But you cannot punish an entire community. I think that now the Hindus, and in particular Bapuji, should accept their demands and thus give them complete satisfaction. This will never have a bad effect. Malaviyaji showed some weakness in this matter here. Bapuji was saying that he could have brought about an agreement if the Sikhs and Malaviyaji as also Dr. Moonje had given him a free hand. Such an agreement would have had a miraculous effect. Even now people like you can create an atmosphere conduced to giving satisfaction to the Muslims. Jugalkishoreji Birla sent a number of telegrams to Bapuji saying that he could come to any agreement with the Muslims and the Hindus would always be with him. But this did not happen.

The British will continue to rule India as long as they possibly can. However, here Bapuji has made a great impact on all Englishmen. Here too his prayer meetings are as crowded as in India. Both men and women come with great feeling to take part in the meetings. This has a very good effect. Bapuji is attended by policemen in plain clothes, armed with pistols. One policeman sits on the front seat of Bapuji's car, while there are two others in a car which leads it. Vehicles are often held up in traffic jams in London streets for a long time. But police cars have a special bell, on hearing which the traffic policeman at once opens out the whole road to them. For Bapuji this bell is used very frequently. The policemen also participate in the prayers and sometimes bring their family members also. They too have great respect for Bapuji.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

During the first week of their arrival here, Mirabehn and Bapuji received a number of angry letters — some of them very bad indeed. Some people had sent a number of dirty old pants. But later on the atmosphere cleared and now not a single insulting letter is being received.

But we hear that conditions are deteriorating in our own country. Bapuji is greatly worried about it. If things do not improve he will start Satyagraha immediately on his return. Bapuji intends starting a big movement against the new ordinance promulgated in Bengal. He has started demanding its withdrawal even from here. The ordinance is already shaking in its roots.

I have sent a photograph of mine and Pyarelaji. I have also sent one of Bapuji which has also been posted to quite a few friends. Shri Ghanshyamdasji has paid for it. You had written to him for some photographs. He has told me about it and I am trying to send some more. *Pranam* to Shrimati Jankibai. Kindly show this letter to Chi. Madalsa and others. Some items would be of interest to them.

Yours
DEVADAS

36. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹

DHULIA MANDIR (JAIL),
April 4, 1932

PUJYA BAPUJI,

Your letter of 26th March redirected from Visapur reached me here on the 2nd. I have been transferred from Visapur to this place on the 24th March. I would have preferred to stay on there since my relations with the jail authorities were improving.

My ear trouble is being well attended to here. In fact, the Superintendent, Mr. Contractor himself is treating me with special care. I feel there is definite improvement. Dr. Modi

¹ This letter does not bear the signature of Jamnalal Bajaj. It is reproduced here from a copy.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

had also examined me in Bombay. He was also of the opinion that the inner inflammation had considerably subsided. Dr. Modi's treatment is being continued here. I doubt if I could have possibly got myself treated with such regularity outside jail. You need not therefore worry about this.

I am taking *Kanji* in the morning and the usual 'C' Class¹ diet in the afternoon and evening. This has suited me well. Of course, if my health demands it, certain adjustments could be made in this diet. But I trust an occasion for this may not arise. I have been for long wishing to experience 'C' Class confinement and this time my wish has been fulfilled by the Government itself. This has given me considerable mental peace. I am in good spirits and I hope with your blessings I shall come out of this test successfully.

In the meantime, Shri Jankidevi's health had deteriorated in Nagpur Jail. I was slightly worried on account of this. But I understand that she is better now. She has been placed in 'A' Class. *Chi. Kamalnayan* is in Hardoi Jail in 'C' Class. I hear that he has lost some weight. He has taken up the work of sweeping. My sister Keserbai, Gulabchand, Gulabchand's sister-in-law, and other members of the family also have got experience of jail life. I am not worried about anything outside. I was prepared to stay even at Visapur and I would have liked it too. In fact, I had expressed this to the jail authorities there. But my ear trouble has been made an excuse to send me here. The surroundings of Visapur Jail used to remind me of Congress camps. There we had all around us natural scenery in place of prison walls. Food arrangements there were quite good. But heat and dust made work difficult. I had had a talk with the authorities on this subject and they had accept-

¹ The lowest classification of prisoners in jail, usually awarded to criminals by the judge while sentencing them. Political prisoners were usually awarded "A" and "B" class with better facilities depending on their status in life but later on stringent sentences were awarded even to political prisoners irrespective of their status, evidently as a deterrent measure.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

ed my suggestions. Had I continued to stay there, it should have been possible for me to get them implemented. I had great hopes that I could have persuaded them to give us, at least during the hot hours of the day, the work of spinning and carding, etc., which could be done indoors. Before I left that place I told friends about the talks I had with the authorities in this connection. It is possible that some decision has been arrived at by now.

In Visapur, in order to give me rest, and making my ear trouble an excuse, they took me from the barracks to the Jail hospital. As a result I got one more field for reform and the Superintendent accepted many of my suggestions. I hope they have been brought into practice by now.

You know Superintendent Mr. Quinn. Deputy-Jailor Mr. Sexton was in Nasik last year. Mr. Ellis, Jailor, was in Ratnagiri last year. Had I remained at Visapur I would have put myself to test by trying to enlist even his co-operation to create a better atmosphere. But that is not possible now.

You have enquired about Dr. Suman. Subsequently he was given 'B' Class and sent to Nasik. He had met me. He was getting milk, etc. for diet. His health was all right. I also used to meet Diwan Master. Gokaldas Talati, Phoolchand Shah, Mama Phadke were also there. Godse, Pannalal Zaveri and Vithal and others from the Ashram were there. From Vidyapeeth there were Trikamlal Shah and other students. So also were the two sons of Darbar Sahib, Lalit Mohan and Rohit, Smt. Sarala Devi's brother and others. From Bombay were S. K. Patil, Ishwarbhai Patel and others. Practically all of them are comfortable.

Here are Vinoba, Pyarelal, Gopalrao and his wife Shanta Behn, Dastane, Mir Jafarulla, Dwarkanath Harkare, Gulzarilal, Khandubhai, Rajarao, Purushottamdas Tricumdas, Kakalbhai, Bhau and Dattu from Wardha Ashram and Pandurang from Sabarmati Ashram, as also many workers from Ahmedabad and East Khandesh. I am getting well acquainted with them. I hope the acquaintance of these friends as well as of those from

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Bombay, who were at Byculla and Visapur jails, would prove useful in life.

There are about 50 sisters here. Because of Vinoba the spiritual atmosphere is good here. The behaviour of the authorities is also good. They are full of sympathy and co-operation towards Vinoba and myself. We all utilise our time properly. Within the bounds of jail rules necessary reforms are being gradually introduced in a spirit of co-operation. Vinoba has been given 'B' Class. Vinoba's giving up of ghee and milk continues to cause us anxiety. His weight has come down to 90 lbs. He is trying to increase his weight. Madhavji's diet these days is one pound milk, four small bananas and one pappaya. Gulzarilal's health is improving. Nowadays he is getting wheat *chapatis* and a pound of milk. There is arrangement for *takli* spinning and carding. One or two individuals are also plying charkhas. Rishabhdas has gone to Visapur.

I got news about you from the Commissioner, Mr. Clayton on Friday. I had a talk with him also regarding some reforms in jail.

You and Sardarji need not worry about me. Respectful *pranams* from all of us to you and your companions.

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

37. From GANDHIJI¹

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 9, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

We were all eagerly expecting your letter which has just arrived and is as complete as it can be. It is a matter for great satisfaction that the prison food has agreed with your system. I had already got information about Jankibehn and Kamalnayan. If Vinoba has not taken a vow, I am firmly of opinion that milk is a necessity for him. He seems to be working very hard even there. Milk appears to be necessary to sustain him in

¹ This letter bears the signature of a jail official indicating that it was seen and passed by him.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

his work. It is my firm belief that in the vegetable kingdom there is undoubtedly something which can serve as an effective substitute for milk and is yet free from the drawbacks of milk. But the physicians who possess the qualifications necessary for such research never give thought to this subject. It is beyond the capacity of men like us; or we should pursue this one matter to the exclusion of everything else—which, again, it is not possible for us to do. It is, therefore, my firm opinion that it is up to us to stick to the task that has devolved on us in the natural course. I do feel that Vinoba must not allow his weight to reduce so much.

You seem to have good company gathered round you. I am jealous of your 'C' Class. I was indeed very glad when I came to know that you were placed in that class. I had no fears about your health being impaired on that account. I never had any misgiving about your capacity to look after your own health, as well as that of your companions. Moreover, it would have been otherwise impossible for you to get the experiences that you are having.

Please tell Pyarelal that I have sent him a complete reply to the letter he got written by Kusum to me. I, therefore, need not say anything about it here. Probably that reply will reach him earlier than this letter. If it does not, you will please let me know.

All three of us are keeping well. For the last two months I have been taking bread, almonds, dates, one vegetable, and lemons. This diet has suited me well. There has been no need for an enema. I am just now writing the history of the Ashram. Much of the time is taken up by letter-writing. Our small group talks about you many a time every day. Please convey our love and regards to everyone there. Do write to me whenever you can.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

38. *From GANDHIJI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Don't you be worried in the least. You should rather dance with joy. It should be an occasion for you to rejoice if one whom you have adopted as father is able to offer the supreme sacrifice for a cause dear to you.¹

I have been exchanging humorous letters² with Jankimaiya. Sardar and Mahadev remember you.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

39. *From GANDHIJI³*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter, which arrived just now, was read to me, and I am dictating this reply to it. May you have, on your birthday, cart-loads of all the blessings you desire. Why should there be any fear of, and sorrow for, death which is sure to come, at some time or other, to all alike—to the young as well as the old, to the black as well as the white, to the human as well as the non-human beings? It often seems to me that death must be a better thing than birth. Leaving aside the travails that have to be undergone in the mother's womb in the pre-natal period, the travails that commence with birth are a matter of personal experience to us. How dependent we are on others during that period.

¹ The reference is to Gandhiji's 'fast unto death' against the provision of separate electorates for the Harijans contained in the British Government's Communal Award. Gandhiji commenced this historic fast on 22nd September 1932 and gave it up only when the Award was amended to delete this provision. Jamnalal Bajaj was President of the Anti-Untouchability Sub-Committee of the Congress for many years. It was notified as an illegal body by the Government in 1932.

² See Part II.

³ This letter bears the signature of a jail official indicating that it was seen and passed by him.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

That dependence, again, is shared equally by one and all. In death, on the other hand, there is no dependence whatsoever, provided the life preceding it has been pure. Neither has a child any desire for knowledge, nor is it in any way possible for it to attain knowledge. At the time of death, on the contrary, it is not only possible for a man to rest in Brahman, but many have been known to abide in that state even in the hour of death. Birth is undoubtedly an entrance into misery, whereas there is a chance of death bringing a complete deliverance from all suffering and sorrow. We can go on thinking in this strain on the beauty and advantage of death and we can make it possible to realize them in our own lives. May your death, whenever it comes, be of this kind. These blessings and this wish include everything that is desirable. Both my companions join me in this wish.

I adhere to the opinion already conveyed to you, even after knowing all the details regarding your health. If you are given permission by the authorities to get food from outside at your own expense, I see nothing objectionable in your doing so. It is the duty of the trustee to treat the body as a trust and take all possible care of it. You should neither ask for nor take even the least quantity of jaggery if it is for the pleasure of the palate, but I see no wrong in getting, if available, even the costliest grapes as medicine. One need not, therefore, feel upset while taking such diet. We may obtain, if we can, the facility to get similar food for others who are in the same condition.

The quantity of wheat that you get at present is, in my view, not necessary for you. I consider it desirable to give up jaggery altogether, as your body has no need of it. It is better to substitute it by non-violent honey, but even this can be dispensed with so long as sweet fruit is available. The addition of sugar in any form to milk makes it difficult to digest. It is advisable to increase the quantity of milk. Your taking butter at present instead of olive oil is all right. The olive oil available here is not always pure. Certainly it cannot be fresh. And olive oil

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

lacks the vitamins which butter contains. The vegetables should be all green ones. Potatoes, etc. almost take the place of bread. They are rich in starch which you need the least. Whatever starch you need, you will get from wheat. Pulses must be scrupulously avoided. Two pounds of milk would be enough, if butter can be taken in a sufficient quantity. The reduction or increase in the quantity of milk depends on the weight. The quantity of butter, or of milk, or of both, should be progressively increased—so long as it is digested—till the weight gets stabilised. Among greens, *dudhi*, pumpkin, leafy vegetables, cabbage, cauliflower, *papadi* without its grains, and brinjals are all good ones. Wheat flour should be taken with the bran. If the wheat has been thoroughly cleaned before grinding, no part of it should be rejected. Among fruits, grapes, mosambis, oranges, pomegranates, apples and pineapples are commendable. Recent experiments in America have shown that it is not advisable to mix many things in one meal. Fruit, when eaten alone, is most beneficial; and it is best to take it on an empty stomach. As the English adage goes, fruit is gold in the morning and silver at noon. The first meal, therefore, should consist of fruit exclusively. Hot water taken early in the morning will not count. If you can get permission to remain in the open air for all the twenty-four hours, it is worth having. It would be good to take in slow and deep breaths daily in the open air. There is no need to be frightened of the cold at night. If the body is properly covered up to the neck, and if the head including the ears is wrapped with a piece of cloth, the cold can do no harm. It is very essential to fill the lungs with the purest air for all the twenty-four hours. A morning sun-bath should be given to the bare body to the extent it is able to stand the heat. You may discuss all this with Dr. Contractor, and then do whatever you consider advisable.

I hope Madhavji is doing well. My blessings to all your companions, and love from us all. You perhaps are aware of the activity relating to untouchability which is being carried on from here. You are welcome to send me whatever ideas occur

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to you on that subject. You will get the official permission to do so.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

40. *From GANDHIJI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

[Received December 11, 1932]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Received both your letters. I was without end busy, and since my views in respect of Kamalnayan were different, there was no urgency in my writing to you. I therefore decided to write at the earliest opportunity when I had some leisure. I was to write today, and just then your second letter came. It would appear from it that your health has gone down. I am not worried however. It was good indeed that there was again a discharge from the ear. There is no benefit in stopping the discharge by artificial means. If you feel some uneasiness in the stomach there must have been something wrong about what you ate. For one or two days now the bread here has not been good. It would perhaps be better if you were to take toasted bread. Your teeth are strong enough. You must be knowing of course that bread has to be well masticated. Toast can be prepared and sent from here, because bread goes to you from this ward, and I have a hand to some extent in baking it. There will therefore be no difficulty about making toast. Even if you eat thrice in a day fresh toast could be sent.

You devote too much time to business interviews. This is not desirable at present. According to Dr. Modi you need complete rest. Talking overmuch is not good at all. Therefore in order to get full benefit of the climate here, it is very essential to take rest and talk less.

Only the day before yesterday I spoke to Colonel Doyle about you for quite some time. He, of course, advised a visit to Europe, but I for one do not see any such necessity. We should content ourselves with whatever facilities are available in this country. But if you have a desire to go to England, do let me know. A reply to my request to meet you more often should

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also be here in a day or two.

Now about Kamalnayan. A special permission will have to be obtained in order to send Kamalnayan to South Africa. There is no facility there for his education. He will not be admitted to any English School or College. A college has been started for Indians but there is nothing special in it from our point of view. There is hardly any facility for private coaching. Phoenix is only a forest. If he goes there, he will only have to confine himself to the printing press. Therefore, in no way is South Africa worth considering. Ceylon, on the other hand is quite the opposite. Kamalnayan can attend any of the schools there. Newralia has the best climate. Its natural beauty can hardly be excelled by any other place. I may have even a number of acquaintances there. Bernard Aluvihare is like a member of the family; he is very learned, and a man of character. He travelled with me from England and belongs to an eminent old family of Ceylon. Moreover, Kamalnayan can be called back immediately if the place does not suit him. Timely correspondence is possible. In my view, therefore, in order to satisfy Kamalnayan's urge to study English, in conformity with our principles Ceylon is the right place. Kamalnayan himself likes the idea. If you do not approve of it, however, let him remain in Wardha for the present. If he were satisfied with Wardha there was nothing more to be said. I understand from his talk as well as his letter that he was not; that is why this question arose.

Manilal's departure on Wednesday has been postponed. So he can now leave only on the 29th.

Chhaganlal Joshi arrived here yesterday in order to help me. This will not lighten my load of work, but as it always used to remain incomplete there will be some difference now.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

41. From GANDHIJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 15, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have got your letter. I note what you say about Kamalnayan. It will not be possible to arrange for his stay in Poona. I did have a talk with Vakil about him. They do not take up boys of his age; in fact, they have no accommodation for such grown-up boarders. We shall have further talks about him when we meet.

You had asked for fountain-pen ink. Mr. Kateli knew we had Swadeshi ink here. So he has sent you an ink-pot from our stock. We have an ample quantity of it.

The sugar contained in the bread made here is likely to be Swadeshi, because Poona imports very little of foreign sugar. I would, however, not raise an objection even if it happens to be foreign, because it is just one of the substances used to make yeast. From the sugar mixed with other ingredients an altogether new substance is produced, just as two gases mixed in certain proportions produce a new compound, viz., water. Therefore, it cannot be said that one who eats bread eats two substances, viz., wheat and sugar. Yeast is produced by a mixture of three substances—sugar, salt and *mahudan*. *Mahudan* is a foreign product. Therefore, in my opinion, even those who are under a vow to abjure foreign sugar ought to have no objection against taking bread. Nevertheless, after having known all this, it is for you to make a final decision. If, however, the *chapatis* that are prepared there go well with you, I would not insist on your taking bread.

I have got no reply as yet from the authorities to my letter seeking permission to see you.

I note what you say about a visit to England being unnecessary for an operation of your ear. I do not entertain any fear of the disease reaching that stage. Thousands of people have a chronic discharge from the ear, and yet they suffer from no other trouble. Since these organs are near the brain, doctors

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

get frightened at the thought of extreme results which can possibly follow, and they in their turn frighten the patients. I would, therefore, rest content with whatever medical aid is available in this country. But this discussion is irrelevant just now. With the return of peace a way out will automatically present itself to us.

My elbow is in the same condition as before. The weight is 103 lbs. The general health is good on the whole.

I enclose a letter which I have received from Jankibehn. See what she has written about Kamalnayan. I have told her that I cannot agree to a teacher and a cook being sent with Kamalnayan¹. In that case he would miss the benefits of going out for studies. I have also told her that I am having an exchange of views with you on this subject.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

42. From GANDHIJI

AMRIT BHAVAN,
ELLIS BRIDGE,
[AHMEDABAD]
July 21, 1933

CHI. JAMNALALJI,²

I have had no letter from you for some time past. I had expected to hear from you. You will have got my letter written from Poona. I am carrying on conversations,³ about sacrificing the Ashram.⁴ It is almost a certainty. The final decision will be taken today. This sacrifice is not to be copied by others. Those who wish to shape their conduct on this ideal will of course do so. There is no need at present for the Ashram at Wardha to follow the example of the Sabarmati Ashram. I will write in greater detail, if I get time.

¹ Kamalnayan was to proceed to Ceylon for studies .

² This letter was taken down by someone else and only signed by Gandhiji. Hence the prefix "ji" is seen added to Jamnalal Bajaj's name.

³ With the Ashramites.

⁴ Gandhiji disbanded the Ashram at this time as part of the civil disobedience campaign.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's son, who was in England and had gone from there to the U.S.A., saw me at Poona. He is now in Bombay. He had had training in a sugar factory in America. God knows how much he has learnt. Khurshedbehn and others are of the opinion that it would be good for him to work in some sugar factory for the present. You may give him a trial at your factory. He has impressed me not with his skill but his goodness. At any rate he says he is prepared to follow my advice. He need not be paid any salary just now. His salary may be fixed after a month's trial, provided he gives sufficient evidence of his skill. Just now he would have to be provided with lodging and boarding only.

I am keeping fairly well. I have put up with Ranchhbhai, and pay a daily visit to the Ashram. I expect to have an interview with Mirabehn at the Sabarmati Jail. I had wired for permission which I have got.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

43. From GANDHIJI

AHMEDABAD,
July 22, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have got your letter. The questions are all relevant. I answer them to the extent I can. The idea in abandoning the Ashram property is that it would be better to leave to the Government a thing which in the last resort they are going to seize. Let them take the whole land rather than attach some articles every year against the non-payment of revenue. Again, at a time when thousands of people have been ruined against their will, it is desirable that the Ashram which bears the name 'Satyagraha' should, of its own free will, sacrifice the whole of its property—a sense of duty also suggests this course.

This, however, does not mean that the Ashram at Wardha has to follow suit. On the contrary I am of the opinion that we should be content to send out from there such of the individuals as may be available. Vinoba cannot now leave the Ashram. He has to stay there for Harijan service. I propose to

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

make the fullest use of the Mahilashram. Can children be sent over there? Some of the ladies here will of course go there. Arrangements have to be made for Nila Nagini and Amlabehn; and I see no alternative to sending them to Wardha. Both have to be employed in Harijan service. Both have to undergo training for the present. Naginidevi should have as little contact with men as possible. If the Government do not take charge of the movable property at the Ashram, it will be openly kept somewhere. The cows present a knotty problem which is engaging my attention just now.

You must not hasten to take the plunge. You may, when the proper time comes for doing so. Will these details suffice for the present? I am writing under great pressure.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

44. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

WARDHA

October 16, 1933

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I am writing this letter in a state of great mental conflict. In spite of my complete faith in civil disobedience as well as in the Congress programme, I have not yet courted imprisonment. This is a fact which I deeply regret. When I was released in April 1933, my ear-disease was considered to have reached a dangerous stage. I underwent whatever treatment was immediately available, and left for Almora to recoup my health. In May you undertook a fast for 21 days, along with which civil disobedience was suspended for a total period of three months. During this interval I had to give evidence, for several days, as a witness in a very important case concerning my family. You too instructed me to go to jail only after I fully regained my health. During this very period the informal conference was held at Poona, mass civil disobedience was converted into individual civil disobedience.

I know, and I implicitly believe, that under these circumstances those who have an implicit faith in civil disobedience

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

ought to resist the temptation of doing any other work, however good or important it may be, and must go to jail. In fact, I had made up my mind to do so. Nevertheless, since my physical and mental health had not recouped to the extent it should have done, my determination weakened; I gave a willing ear to the advice of elders and friends not to court imprisonment for some time more for this very reason; and I fixed November 12th as the limit for my staying out.

Dr. Modi has very recently examined my ear and said that, while the progress had been good, extra care was absolutely necessary for the disease to be rooted out, and that only then would the danger be eliminated.

My faith tells me that, in the present days of individual civil disobedience, everyone who is not invalid or bedridden must go to jail. On the other hand, there is the fear of the ear-ache getting aggravated in the prison. I do not like to be either in the 'A' or the 'B' Class because, this class distinction does harm to the country. At the same time, I should not like to forego the class that is officially given, and then to ask for the same facilities for reasons of health. In this state of weakness, I am thinking of devoting greater attention to physical and mental health.

Under the circumstances in which I am placed I ought to have resigned long ago my membership of the Working Committee.¹ I believe that those who lack faith in civil disobedience or in the Congress programme should not hold any responsible office in the Congress. Similarly, persons like me, who despite their implicit faith in both these things avoid going to jail for reasons of health, should also vacate their posts of responsibility. I find that I shall have to give some more time to the recovery of my health. It is wholly improper, under these circumstances, for me to continue as a member of the Working Committee and as the Treasurer of the Congress. The only proper course for me is to tender my resignation. I am therefore sending my resignation to you. In case no treasurer is available imme-

¹ The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

diately I shall work in that capacity, though not as a member of the Working Committee, till a new treasurer is appointed.

This of course does not mean that I am absolved from my obligation to prosecute the programme of the Congress to the best of my ability.

I know that my resignation is likely to give rise to some misunderstanding in Congress circles. But it is more imperative to maintain purity in the affairs of the country, and that will undoubtedly prove to be a gain in the end.

With *pranams*,

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

45. From GANDHIJI

February 2, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have read your letter about Kamalnayan and what he himself has written. He wants to finish the course here and take the Hindi Madhyama examination. I wish to make the following change. He should finish the entire course in Hindi and take the final test. He should make his English more sound, learn Sanskrit, and thereafter go to America, not England. Excellent facilities can be made available for his studies there. After spending some time in America, he should travel extensively. Experience gained this way will stand him in good stead. He will be able to study better as he becomes more mature. It is good that he is not enamoured of examinations. In short, I do not wish to come in the way of his desire to see the West. Only, I think it is necessary for him to go from here better equipped.

What work is Surendra engaged in?

I have decided to send Amlabehn to Sabarmati. If that does not suit her, we shall see.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

46. *From GANDHIJI*

May 21, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have gone through Elwin's letter which I return under separate cover to save a little postage. It seems to me that he will have to be given monetary help after an inspection of his institution. What is the source of the money he gets at present? By what method does he teach music? Who are his colleagues besides Shamrao?

Meat-eating seems inevitable for him. His faith is not such as would enable him to live on milk and fruits. But his diet, whatever it be, should be no cause for withholding monetary aid from him. If, however, spinning is stopped or done indifferently, it cannot be tolerated. If he does not believe in spinning, he should give it up. I do not mean to say that he can get help only if he sticks to spinning. What I mean is that he must follow truth as he sees it. What we have to assure ourselves about is that his work and his methods are clean and above board. Elwin, being guileless, may possibly deceive himself. It is necessary for his friends, therefore, to be watchful.

Dr. Ansari's party¹ I hope, has been able to put its machinery in working order. Do take interest in it till its way is cleared. Raja also should interest himself in it. Having brought Malaviyaji into the Board, it is up to us to render it all possible help, and also to see to it that he does no harm. Harm can be done both by undue delay and over-haste.

Have you seen my itinerary till July? There is scope in it for friends to meet me at many places.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ The reference is to the Parliamentary Board of the Congress of which Dr. Ansari was the Chairman.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

47. *From MAHADEV DESAI*

[TELEGRAM]

WARDHAGANJ,

August 14, 1934

JAMNALAL, POLYCLINIC, QUEENS ROAD,
BOMBAY

Midst Prayerful Rejoicings Of All Bapu Broke Fast¹ With Hot water Honey At Hand Of Jankibehn After Prayers Led By Vinoba Singing Tukarams Hymn Celebrating Fulfilment Of All His Spiritual Aspirations Followed By Shivaji With Another Hymn And Balkoba Singing Harinomarag Then Followed Doctor Datta With Verses From Corinthians On Matchless Power Of Love Amtulsalam Read Suras From Koran Aney With Verses Of His Composition Your Telegram Was Then Handed To Bapu After Ramdhun Fast Was Broken Bapu Was Too Much Moved To Speak Aything He Had Very Uncomfortable Night Accompanied By Nausea Blood Pressure Now Highest Recorded During Fast 190 And 100 Pulse 72 Temperature 98 Weight 94.

MAHADEV

48. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,

August 15, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

This is the first letter I am writing after the fast. I am quite well. I have taken milk today. My blood pressure is excellent. Don't you, therefore, worry about me. Let Jankibehn stay as long as she likes. It may not perhaps be necessary to keep Om there for a long time. It is well that Mahadev and Madanmohan are leaving for Bombay. In my view their going is essential. They may even return tomorrow, if they possibly can. Their absence will cause no inconvenience here. You may take chloro-

¹ This refers to the fast undertaken by Gandhiji as penance for an injury sustained by one Swami Lal Nath, a 'Sanatanist', at the anti-untouchability meeting at Ajmer addressed by Gandhiji.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

form¹ with God enshrined in the heart. All will end well. God has yet to take much service from you, has yet to get much greater dedication made by you.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

49. From GANDHIJI

August 20, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

After Vinoba left yesterday, I received a very good telegram from Dr. Jivraj. From it I learnt that there was no bleeding again and the pain had also subsided. Still, it was good that Vinoba took time off to see you. You might have known that Kamalnayan was responsible for his visit. Kamalnayan got frightened on seeing your agony on Saturday. So, as soon as he arrived here he sent word to me through Mahadev. Welcoming the suggestion, I informed Vinoba and he immediately got ready to go. Madalsa also wanted to go. But being a devotee, she sensed Vinoba's disapproval and stayed back. Her restraint will reward her. It is good that she did not go. If the pain has subsided and if your mind is at peace, relieve Vinoba early. He may, however, stay as long as necessary. Work here is being organised. Vinoba remains absorbed in it day and night.

You will of course, keep your promise regarding your studies. I have written this only for your assurance. Do not get involved in a discussion about it with Vinoba. Your present *sadhana* is to make your body fit as soon as possible. You should not worry about anything here or elsewhere, certainly not about me because I am doing perfectly well. Radhakrishna and Shivaji are keeping excellent guard around me. Please do not talk much. It is in one's own interest to make frugal use of the doctors' concessions. We should comply with the doctors' instructions so long as they are not contrary to our *dharma*. It is a different matter if they make some concessions in response to our wishes.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ The reference is to an ear-operation which Jamnalal Bajaj underwent.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Jajuji met me. He gave me the news. Do not at all be in a hurry to send Madanmohan. Rest assured that no one has any difficulty here.

50. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA

August 23, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter as also those from Om, Jankimaiya and Madanmohan. Then Vinoba brought me news, and on the top of it all, there is now a telegram from Dr. Shah. It can, therefore, be presumed that the healing process will be over in a few days. Don't however, build castles in the air. Have patience, and go through the whole treatment. There is no need for any haste or worry. Radhakrishna manages the affairs here efficiently. He and many others are keeping guard around me.

Can a sentence be really humorous if it needs to be labelled as 'humorous'? Jankinaiya screams whereas you suppress your feelings and keep everything in your mind. Which is better? When she screams we at least know that she is suffering. You, on the other hand, suffer in silence; and we are deluded into the belief that all is well with you. Now tell me which of the partners surpasses the other.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

51. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,

August 25, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You seem to be making fairly rapid strides. All patients have the privilege to be treated as royalty. That is the pleasure of illness. But the poor *Daridranarayana*, when it is his lot to be ill, gets no pleasure out of it.

I enclose a letter for Dr. Shah and another, of course, for Om.

Things seem to be going on well here.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

52. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,
September 27, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Vallabhbhai informs me that you are about to buy up a textile mill at ..., 'you', i.e. the firm.¹ The news did give me a shock. It seemed to me incongruous for one who has so deeply interested himself in khadi to become a mill-owner. I could not, however, make up my mind to write to you anything about it. In the meanwhile Jankimaiya came to see me yesterday. A great load is off her mind as the *Madhyama* examination, for which she appeared, is over. She is, however, ill at ease ever since she heard of this proposal. "For whose benefit can this incubus be?" she asks. The children too do not approve of it. The servants say: "Now that the master is going to have a mill of his own, he won't ask us to put on khadi." No one has liked this step. Do, therefore, give up the idea. If the bargain has already been made, you may withdraw your share from it. The other partners are free to purchase it, if they wish. If you are only in need of a business, there are many other avenues open to you. If you need more earnings for charitable purposes, we can very well do without such charity. Om twits me by saying. "You prompt Kakaji to purchase a mill because you want more money for the Congress, don't you?" What answer

¹ Jamnalal Bajaj was somehow persuaded to agree to buy a cotton textile mill on behalf of his firm by several arguments put forth in favour of such a step by his friends and business associates. One of the chief arguments that weighed with him was that if he purchased and managed a mill he could look after the needs and interests of the mill-workers strictly in accordance with Gandhiji's wishes in the matter. He wanted to show that a cotton mill could be run so as to satisfy labour and at the same time make reasonable profits. But having made this decision he was evidently unhappy about it and thought deeply whether he was after all doing the right thing in purchasing the cotton mill. From entries in his diary it can be gathered that even before he received this letter from Gandhiji he had finally made up his mind against purchasing the mill.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

can I give to them all? If possible, do convey by wire the happy news of cancellation.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

53. From GANDHIJI

WARDHA,

October 5, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have got your letters. I was relieved to learn that you have been saved from the encumbrance of the mill. The scare of that wolf coming gave me a fine demonstration of the mentality of Jankibehn and the children. It delighted me to see them all agitated so much. We may wish this spirit to abide with them for ever.

You are not to move from there till the doctor gives you a full discharge.

We will have as many talks here as possible. The rest at the Congress¹ and thereafter. I shall have to return to Wardha immediately after the Congress. I have planned nothing new to be done immediately after the Congress session. It will be thought of at the meeting to be held here.

Things here are going on well.

I hope you write to Kamala, whenever you can. Since Khurshed Behn is there just now, you can as well write to her.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

54. From GANDHIJI

WARDHA,

December 22, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Why is there no news yet about your ears? Kishorelal and Gomati are bed-ridden. Gomati is somewhat better. Kishorelal still has fever, though it is on the decline. Preparations are afoot to transfer the A.I.V.I.A.² to the garden.³ Plans are being

¹ Congress session held at Bombay in October 1934.

² All India Village Industries Association.

³ This garden with a house on the outskirt of Wardha town was donated to Gandhiji by Jamnalalji when Gandhiji came to stay at Wardha. Later it was named Maganwadi in memory of Maganlal Gandhi.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

made to put up two rooms on the terrace. Radhakrishna had brought to me the proposal of putting up one room. It is now proposed to have two. This will involve an expenditure of about Rs. 2,000. It is not unavoidable. The rooms would be really useful only in the rainy season. In the daytime I can stay on the ground floor. At night I should certainly love to sleep on the terrace. The rooms on the terrace should, therefore, be constructed only with a view to their future use. As the proposal was brought to me, I was tempted to give my consent. If you disapprove of the proposal, it will fall through and Rs. 2,000 will be saved, though it is true that the money is no longer yours. As I am writing this, however, it occurs to me that I must myself veto the proposal, at any rate for the present. The foregoing may, therefore, be taken as cancelled.

Krishna again gently asks for Prabha on behalf of Swaruprani. I have already written to her that Prabha is so well settled down where she is that she cannot be easily relieved, but that it may be feasible to send some other good lady from there. I believe someone may be available there who would be a good companion for Swaruprani. You may explain this to Swaruprani if you can muster the courage. Otherwise leave the matter to me.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

55. From GANDHIJI

WARDHA,
December 26, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Don't insist on the construction of the two rooms just now. It is after the fullest consideration that I have vetoed the proposal. Everything is a trust, is it not? Prosperity is possible only if every pie is saved! It makes no difference whether the firm is a private one or belongs to *Daridranarayan*. In the firm of *Daridranarayan* there should rather be stricter vigilance. I have not been able to prepare the draft about the Maganlal Memorial. I hope to prepare it before leaving, if at all possible.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

How I wish Abhyankar is spared. Tell him, when you meet him, that he is very much in my thoughts.

Khansaheb is to accompany me to Delhi. Meher also will go with us. She too is doing well. At present Anand's father and Vaikunth Mehta are here. Anand's father has just returned from a world tour. He will take keen interest in the A.I.V.I.A.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

56. From GANDHIJI

DELHI,

January 14, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I note that you will not be able to come. You must stay there until the doctor permits you to leave. Don't take up too much work.

Ramdas feels that Manilal is rather reluctant to allow him to stay at Mani Bhuvan. It is, therefore, proper that he should leave that place. Now he wants to take a separate room and live there. The room rent will come to about Rs. 25 per month and he is asking for it. I think he should be allowed to have it although it looks rather improper. But Ramdas's disease is such that in his case even improper things seem proper. It is difficult to say how far a father's attachment is misleading me in this instance. If you feel that this demand of Ramdas's is improper, you have long ago acquired the right of telling him so.

Do what you think proper. I note what you write about Swaruprani. Sarup has been sending telegrams.

I will have to be here at least till the 25th. The 28th is the last date for my departure from here. Rajaji will be here with Laxmi tomorrow.

Do you meet Jai Prakash?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

57. *From GANDHIJI*

DELHI,
January 26, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter to hand. Khan Saheb is here today. Your telegram was read out to him. Thereupon, a long telegram conveying blessings was sent to you which you must have received. You seem to have well cultivated the knack of arranging marriages. This marriage especially will go down in history. Poor Sofia must have never imagined that she would marry a Pathan. Neither could Saadullah have ever thought he would marry a Khoja girl. As for me, I have immensely liked your choice. Both will be happy and Sofia will be able to render as much service as she wishes. All of us will reach Wardha on Tuesday. There will not be any outsiders with us. Chandra-tyagi was betrothed to Balvir. She is a good girl. Both Marys will alight at Betul.

It seems Sardar, Rajaji and Rajenbabu will have to stay on till February 8. By then the discussion on the Bill will be over.

Kamalnayan is impatient to go to Ceylon but it is necessary for him to wait a little.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

58. *From GANDHIJI*

[DELHI],
January 30, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I received your letters on my arrival here. I find that your ear is troubling you a lot. Everyone here is worried about it. Ghanshyamdas too is worried. He has immense faith in his Jewish doctor in Calcutta. The operation performed on him seems to have been successful. It is also because of this that he insists that if your ear is not cured soon, his doctor should be consulted. I have asked Dr. Jivraj for all the details. You too might think it over. I do not like it being postponed again and again. Do you personally wish that Jankidevi should come over there? Last night she appeared to be rather eager to go.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

She also felt that perhaps you wanted her there. If so, she would indeed like to go. I have suggested that your reply to this letter be awaited. You may send a telegram in reply if necessary. Let me know all the details of the ailment.

For the present I remain here. Do not think of coming here till the doctor definitely gives permission.

You will do well to follow my advice regarding diet. Give up milk, fruits, whole wheat chapatis, rice, potatoes, etc. Take leafy vegetables. Don't eat all sorts of things whenever you like. Insist on not eating anything outside of the fixed times. The less you tax your stomach at one time the better. Doctors' opinions on diet need not necessarily be followed strictly. Their own experience in this matter often happens to be rather limited.

I myself am sending the money to Durgaprasad for the time being. I had already instructed to have it sent. I had no idea that he had no money to go to Bombay.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

Mehertaj did not come after all. Lali will probably go to Dehra Dun.

59. From GANDHIJI

WARDHA,
March 24, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It is good that Madalsa is joining you at Kathgodam. By then, we shall also know the condition of her boils.

With regard to Rajendrababu, deal with the matter in a practical manner. Execute either a mortgage or a sale deed. Charge interest but charge the minimum.

If you do not keep well at Bhavali, leave the place immediately. X used to send vegetable parcels to Kamala. She writes that since they were not good, it has been discontinued. Make enquiries about vegetables and fruits.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

60. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,
August 3, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You are going to Indore to collect money for the fund. In this connection, you wanted to know three things from me. (1) How will this money be spent? (2) Can we accept donations earmarked for any specific purposes? (3) Am I thinking of setting up a trust or a committee to spend this money or do I have some other arrangement in mind?

Regarding these points I would like to clarify that I require the money for propagating Hindi mainly in South India; but if need arises, I would also like to spend it for propagating Hindi in other States like Bengal, Assam, Sind, Gujarat, Punjab, etc. where Hindi has not been propagated or even secured a foothold. If any donor wants to give money earmarked for work in a particular province, or for training *pracharaks* for this work, we should have no objection in accepting his donation.

Now remains the question of a trust or a committee. When we have got the money, I intend to have it spent under my supervision through either a trust or a committee or a registered institution.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

61. *From GANDHIJI,*

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
September 20, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hear that the date of your arrival here has been postponed. I am glad about it, because it will prolong your stay in Almora. You are indeed in need of rest. Of course it is not that you will be able to get complete rest even by continuing to stay there. You will have to write letters. Also visitors will be calling on you, and there must be other local work too. Still, you will certainly not have the back-breaking work that you have to do here. Hence I shall be only too happy if you stay on there till winter sets in. Besides, everyone praises the winter of that place. The Simla

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

winter is considered still better, and the living costs are cheaper even than in Wardha. Bungalows can be hired almost for a song; leafy vegetables, fruits, etc. are available cheap and in plenty; and the natural scenery is most beautiful. The cold exists only in peoples' imagination. It is less severe than the Lahore cold in winter. Hence I grant you leave even upto winter. You will be rendering some service wherever you are. I think if you were to spend one full year quietly in the hills, you will be cured of your ear trouble. Madalsa will build up her body and Jankimaiya too will become a good horsewoman provided she does not break her bones. I would, no doubt, like your presence at the meeting of the Charkha Sangh, but if you are happy there I can manage without you. I have had a great deal of discussion about the new policy. You can write down and forward your views from there. As regards the Khadi Pratishtan of Meerut, and the Bhandar of Kashmir, my views on them have also crystallised. You can send in your comments on these matters too and then submit to whatever is the outcome.

Now remains only the meeting of the Congress Committee. It does not matter if you do not attend that too. I am giving you all these exemptions only on condition that you will spend the whole of this time somewhere in the hills. If you come down, it will be your duty to attend both the meetings. You were to go to Jullundur. Why did you not go? Radhakrishna and Sardar thought you did. Sardar has to go there. Everything here is going on well. Balkoba is experimenting on a diet exclusively of milk under the supervision of Gaurishankar. He is well now. Bhagwanji's letter is sent herewith.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

62. From MAHADEVI DESAI

ON REACHING NASIK
January 17, 1936

DEAR RESPECTED JAMNALALJI,

I am writing this letter on reaching Nasik. Bapu is in excellent health. He does not at all seem to be ill when he talks.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Sardar started joking from the moment the train started. He said to the doctor : "Look, the train has started; now switch off the light." Thereupon the doctor started looking for the switch, and there was a burst of laughter. Then Sardar said: "The third class does not have switches doctor!" Bapu rose at 3.45 in the morning, said his prayers alone and went to sleep. Mani-behn and I got up at 4 O'clock and thinking that Bapu was asleep, both of us said our prayers and we too went to sleep. In the morning we learnt that Bapu had finished his prayers before us. Having slept immediately after prayers, he got up at 5.30. Then he slept on again. At 6.30 Sardar said to Bapu : "Who is ill—you or we? You can sleep even on a wooden board. Who will say you are ill? We, who are unable to sleep on these wooden seats, are we not the real patients?" Such banter is always going on. The coach was as good as reserved, because no one came in up to Nasik. But now we have arrived at Nasik and if this letter is to reach you tomorrow, it has to be posted here.

With love and respects,

PRANAM FROM MAHADEV

63. From GANDHIJI

DELHI,

March 19, 1936

MY VIEWS ON STAYING IN A VILLAGE¹

If Ba desires then along with her, otherwise I would stay alone in a hut in Segaoon.

Mirabehn's hut may not suffice for me.

As little expense as possible should be incurred in building the hut and in no case should the expenses exceed Rs. 100.

Whatever help I might need, I should obtain from Segaoon.

I should pay visits to Maganwadi as often as necessary. For that I should use whatever vehicle I can get.

¹ This note was found in the files of Jamnalal Bajaj. Obviously, Gandhiji must have sent it to him for his opinion before taking a final decision.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

(*One line missing*)

Mira must not give her time to attend personally on me, but she can help me in my village work.

If necessary, Mahadev, Kanti and others might stay in the village. For them simple huts should be erected.

Along with this, I shall continue my other outside activities.

Unless there is some special reason, people from outside should not come to see me at Segaon. They may see me only at Maganwadi on the days fixed for my going there.

(*Two lines missing*)

The work of village industries will gain momentum and the attention of the people will be directed to village handicrafts if I stayed in a village. By doing this, full use could be made of Mirabehn's great capacities. And Mahadev, Kanti and others will also get a novel and good experience.

On my staying in a village, whatever defects there may be in my way of thinking will come to the surface.

Others will, no doubt, get encouragement.

I do not have any preference for staying in Segaon in particular but it came to my mind in the natural course. But, if there is any other more suitable village, I am prepared to consider it.

BAPU

64. *From GANDHIJI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 17, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The fact that so many members of the A.I.V.I.A. had to come over here yesterday filled me with shame and sorrow. I must myself go to Wardha for meetings like these. That is just the way to effect a saving in expenditure also. This moving about is not likely to do harm to my body. I should be very much pained, on the other hand, if I did not go there and dragged them all here. You will, therefore, send me a car or a bullock-cart, whichever is available, so that I can reach there at 1-45 P.M. at the latest. All the members may be invited to the bungalow.¹

¹ Jamnalal Bajaj's residence at Bajajwadi, Wardha.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

If it is not feasible to hold the meeting at the bungalow, it may as well be held at Maganwadi. You may yourself dispose of the matters which directly concern the A.I.S.A. or which are of an intricate nature as far as possible, so that after my arrival we can concentrate exclusively on the most important matters.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

65. From GANDHIJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 12, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter.

Bahadurji is welcome.

I have learnt about Shriman's fever. It is a bad and malignant fever. I expect to go and see him today. I am dictating this after morning prayer. Mahadev and Kishorelal have made a suggestion to me to postpone the Educational Conference in view of Shriman's illness. It did not appeal to me. You must under no circumstances be saddled with the responsibility of accommodating a hundred persons. The expenses, I presume, will be met by you. I don't worry about them. But I believe that activities of this nature must not be undertaken if others cannot carry out the administrative tasks without your direct assistance. These tasks can be creditably performed only if the others have acquired this capacity. I have, therefore, sent word to Aryanayakam that he should allow the Conference to be held only if he has enough of self-confidence and capacity to see it through, and that otherwise the Conference may be postponed. The idea originated with Shriman. I had wholly relied on him, and was free from anxiety so long as he was well. I had ruled out the possibility of his being ill. When, therefore, I heard of his illness, I got ruffled. I have considered Shriman a most wonderful find of yours. He has in him an extraordinary amalgam of scholarship, sobriety and humility. The Conference without his presence will be odious to me. But since tasks once begun should not be left incomplete, I have insisted on the Conference being held,

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

provided Aryanayakam does not lose his self-confidence and you do not oppose the plan. Your opposition would be, to me, justifiable, for I have implicit faith in your judgement with reference to practical affairs. You alone are in a position to know best whether the Conference can be successfully held without you and without the use of your bungalow. If, therefore, you wish the Conference to be put off,¹ you will send me a telegram to that effect, and I will act up to it.

I hope you are well. Savitri must be having a good time.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

66. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ²

PAUNAR, WARDHA

Kartik Shukla 12, 1995

[November 4, 1938]

PUJYA SHREE BAPUJI,

I have completed today the 49th year both according to the English and the Indian calendars, and am entering my 50th. I am sure I have your blessings now and for ever. But during the last two years, or rather two and a half, whenever I have pondered over things, it has seemed clear to me that I do not deserve your blessings. While thinking of my weaknesses during these years, and especially after the tragic death of Chhotelalji, my mind often turned even to the idea of suicide. I have tried to shake it off, because I considered suicide as cowardice and sin, and my intellectual conviction still remains the same. What pains me more is the fact that, in my view, I am going downward instead of rising in the spiritual scale. This may be due

¹ Ultimately the Conference was held and was a thorough success. The Wardha Scheme of Basic Education was a direct outcome of this Conference.

² The original of this letter was miscarried and did not reach Gandhiji at all. Jamnalal Bajaj came to know about this only when he met Gandhiji about 3 weeks later, on the 27th November 1938. He therefore personally gave a copy of this letter to Gandhiji when he met him again on 26th December. Since it was a day of silence for Gandhiji and since Jamnalal Bajaj had to leave Wardha for Jaipur the very next day, Gandhiji sent a written reply to it (see the next letter).

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

to several causes, but the responsibility for them all is solely mine. Till the A.I.C.C. meeting at Delhi, my mind was torn between two opposite trends of thought—one suggesting that I should retire from all public activities and, if possible, also from private ones; and the other telling me that, in case this is not possible, I should take over work involving greater responsibility than at present and immerse myself in it day and night. Now, however, I feel that I am likely to derive greater solace only by giving up all the activities. My weaknesses, in my view, are as follows:

The pursuit of truth and non-violence has grown weaker. I am afraid my faith in these may suffer a set-back. This has led to an increase in my intolerance. My anger has also been growing in intensity. Carnal desires seem to be on the increase. And so also greed. How can a man, who clearly sees all these vices or weaknesses increasing in himself, have any interest in living? Moreover, if the weaknesses were confined to thoughts, I should have had some zest for striving to resist them. But I feel helpless when I am unable to control my sense-organs and when I see sins being committed by the body. Outwardly, I have much fortitude; and I will persist in the effort to keep it up. Today, however, I am afraid that, if the present state of mind continues, I shall either reach a stage of insanity or shall be dragged down the path of degradation. If, therefore, I got an invitation today from natural death, my soul tells me, I should really get peace. For, my future appears to be dark. If today, I am inwardly assured that I shall not possibly fall, and that I shall never swerve from the path of truth, my interest in life is likely to revive. During recent years I have received many mental shocks from members of the family and from friends, for which I was not prepared. If I continue to receive such shocks, the result would be nothing but insanity for me. Death I cannot invite at will. Suicide I hold to be cowardly and sinful. I am, therefore, at a loss to know what to do. To whom should I pour out the anguish of my heart? Who is there who, by love, can mend my mental condition? I had counted on you and Vinoba. But the hope in regard to you is receding. I have a spark of hope that Vinoba

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

may yet show me some satisfactory way out of this agony.

During these years I often came to you with a mind to unburden myself. But I could not do so to the fullest extent, because of your own mental and physical condition and your environment. This has distressed me; and I have often asked myself whether I am not deceiving you and other friends. As I have always held the opinion that there can be no sin or meanness worse than deceit, I tried to reveal my condition to some friends and members of my family. Probably because these 'confessions' made to them fell short of the whole truth, or maybe for other reasons, they did not yield the desired result.

Now you can, if you like, show me a sovereign remedy. I feel that my intellect is still sound. I am aware of my weaknesses as also of the reasons which have given rise to them. I have also the will to get rid of these weaknesses. It is still possible to strengthen this will. My mind, however, longs for some person to stay with me, someone who is endowed with love, a spirit of service, and generosity, and whose spotless character, loving kindness, and service may impart peace to my mind. Have you in view any man or woman of this type? And if you have, would it be possible for him or her to stay with me and render to me this kind of service? I dare not ask a public worker to give up his work for the sake of my personal service. The account of the weaknesses I have given above does not mean that I did not have these weaknesses before, and that they newly came in during recent years. They existed even before, but I felt that they were fast receding. At present, however, I do not have that feeling, which makes all the difference.

You will kindly show me some means whereby I may be counted at least among the ordinary men of the world. If common men consider that I do not possess greater purity and virtue than themselves, that in itself is likely to do me good by chastening me. I know my present condition will cause you pain. But I am really at the end of my tether. I feel hesitation even in bowing down before you.

I have, on this occasion of my birthday, shared with you

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

my thoughts as they arose in my mind. When you come here, you will kindly find time to tell me whatever you wish to say. Till then I will try to take help from Vinoba.

With *pranams*,

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

P.S.—I have shown this letter to Vinoba and Radhakrishna. I will show it to Jankidevi, Kamalnayan and others later on. I have kept a copy of it with me.

J.B.

67. From GANDHIJI

SEGAON (WARDHA),
December 26, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Very recently I happened to read 'a thought for the day' in English which in effect means that man should brood over his virtues and not his faults, because man becomes what he broods over. This does not mean that one should not see one's own faults. They must be seen. But one should not become mad by constantly thinking of them. A similar dictum can be found in our scriptures also. You should, therefore, have self-confidence and feel assured that only good deeds are going to be performed by you. In the past assuredly you have done so.

You should give up excessive greed. Private trade should be given up, even if the aim of it is charity. If it cannot be given up, a strict limitation should be put on it. Then you should try to leave the political field. If it is essential to continue taking part in it, and if you can do so on your own terms, you should confine your activity to shaping the Central Provinces. Your legitimate field, however, is philanthropic trade. You should, therefore, again devote all your energy to the A.I.S.A. That activity has a scope for the fullest use of your intelligence, your moral integrity, and your business talents. In politics one repeatedly comes across much filth. Politics, therefore, is likely to give you little satisfaction. Complete independence is easy to attain, if the activity of the A.I.S.A. achieves cent per cent suc-

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

cess. If you plunge into it, you can dabble somewhat also in village industries and removal of untouchability. That, however, would be left to your own choice. I have mentioned these to suggest sufficient activities to your own liking, with a view to checking the excessive greed.

The second thing is carnal desire. It is somewhat more difficult to tackle. If I have understood you aright, I feel that you ought to give up the personal service of women. It is not everyone that is able to take the risk with impunity. I can be said to be the only one in our group to render personal service to women. My success or failure can be judged after my death. For me it is yet in the experimental stage. I cannot confidently say that I have achieved unqualified success in the experiment. My aspiration is to reach the state of Shukadeva. I am yet miles away from it. If you have enough of self-confidence, I have nothing to say. If, however, that self-confidence is wanting, and if my reading is correct, you should dive deep into the heart and make the necessary change. I do not suggest the giving up of the service of women in the general sense of the term.

If any one of these suggestions does not find an echo in your heart, it is not to be adopted. You will, when we meet, have a free exchange of views with me on this subject. There is absolutely no reason for despair. You are not fallen, you are a votary of truth. A votary of truth need fear no fall.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

68. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI

December 30, 1938

PUJYA SHREE BAPUJI,

I reached Sawai Madhopur yesterday by the Frontier Mail. As I got down from the train, I met on the platform of the Jaipur line, the following officers of the State :

1. R. B. Lala Diwan Chand, Dy. I.G. of Police;
2. D. N. Chakravarti, Superintendent of Police;
3. Hasan Ali, Sub-Inspector of Police; and
4. Laxmi Narain, Tehsildar, Sawai Madhopur.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

The I. G. of Police, Mr. Young also arrived after ten minutes. A notice was served on me in the presence of all these persons, of which I enclose a copy¹ along with this letter. Mr. Young talked to me for about 1½ hours. Though earlier I had decided not to obey any such prohibitory order, the view expressed by you the other day had appealed to me. Therefore, I complied with the order and came over to Delhi. It was necessary for me to discuss the matter with friends from the Jaipur Praja Mandal.

These friends felt that I should have defied the order then and there, but when I explained your views to Hirlalji, he agreed. I have issued a statement to the press regarding the restrictions imposed on me; I am enclosing a copy.

The working committee of the Jaipur Praja Mandal will meet in Jaipur from tomorrow. It will discuss the situation arising out of the restrictions imposed on me and prepare a rough draft of the political demands of the Praja Mandal. Shri Hiralalji and myself will bring the draft to Bardoli in 3-4 days and we hope to finalise it after we have had your views and advice.

You had advised me to write a letter in the event of restrictions being imposed on me. If the letter is to be from me, please send a draft through Shri Sagarmal. If you yourself decide to write to any one on this subject, please do also let me know about it through him.

PRANAM FROM JAMNALAL BAJAJ

69. From GANDHIJI to CHANDRABHAL JOHRI²

[TELEGRAM]

JOHRI,
JAIPUR.

[February 8, 1939 (?)]

Jamnalal is safe wherever he is. Trying issue statement.
Keep me informed.

BAPU

¹ Please see pages 53, 54 and 55 for the text of the order and Gandhiji's comments.

² Jamnalal Bajaj was arrested at Jaipur on 6th February 1939 and was taken to an unknown destination. Shri Chandrabhal Johri was with him at the time of the arrest. But he was not given information regard-

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

70. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*
[TELEGRAM]

AGRA,

February 9, 1939

MAHATMA GANDHI,
WARDHA,

Saw statement. Much version regarding Young incorrect owing confusion telephonic message. Correct version appears Hindustan Times Eighth Ninth Dak Edition. Hope do needful. Entering again Sunday.¹

JAMNALAL

71. *From GANDHIJI,*
[TELEGRAM]

JAMNALALJI,
SAINIK,
AGRA.

Your telegram. Send definite corrections my version. Will then publish revision. Am quite clear you should cross border if possible on foot with small party without giving notice. Janki-devi must not leave Wardha. She is unfit physically and Kamalas approaching delivery makes it dangerous for her leave Wardha. If she went she must throw herself into struggle and can never come back before struggle over. Am convinced time has not arrived for her to do so. Even if she was well and otherwise free to leave Wardha I would discountenance her leaving but would reserve her future when struggle in full swing.

BAPU

ing Jamnalalji's whereabouts in spite of a promise made by the authorities. He therefore sent a telegram to Gandhiji on 7th Feb. 1939 from Jaipur expressing his anxiety. This is in reply to his telegram.

¹ It transpired that after his arrest on 6th February Jamnalal Bajaj was taken out of Jaipur territory to Bharatpur State and released there on the 7th.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

72. *From GANDHIJI*

DELHI,

March 16, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I deliberately refrain from writing at length. It is my firm opinion that we must make no enhancement in our demands.¹ We should withdraw civil disobedience if the Praja Mandal is recognised unconditionally and civic liberty is conceded. The prisoners of course must be released.

I hope you keep fit. Your mental condition also, I presume, is excellent. Do you read anything regularly? Do you spin? What is your weight? Fruits, etc. must necessarily be taken. Any obstinacy in this matter is self-delusion. One may not indulge the palate, but must supply the requirements of the body as medicines.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

73. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

MORAN SAGAR (JAIPUR),

April 15, 1939

PUJYA BAPUJI,

There was anxiety on reading the news about Pujya Ba's illness. Later, read the news about her recovery, and I hope she has completely recovered by now.

Reports about affairs in Rajkot are not satisfactory. May God bestow good sense upon the Thakore Saheb and his advisers. You probably will have to stay on at Rajkot for the present.

It was natural to be pained on reading about the events in the Ramdurg State (Karnataka)². From this I was convinced that you were perfectly right in suspending satyagraha in the

¹ Demands of the Jaipur State Praja Mandal.

² The State Government had arrested the President and some of the workers of the Ramdurg Praja Mandal. To get their leaders released and perhaps also to wreak vengeance a mob of about 2000 persons attacked the officials of the State Government. The Government opened fire to repulse the attack. As a result of this agitation an internal struggle arose between brahmins and non-brahmins of the State.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

States. Whatever God does or gets done through us is all for the good.

My health is much better. The cough has disappeared. In the foot too there is no pain. I got myself weighed on 11th April; it is about 196, that is 11 to 12 lbs less than before. I am not worried about this loss of weight as during the last 25 days I have been taking food only once a day. In the evenings I take milk. The water here is 'heavy'; so I boil it before drinking.

I feel quite happy here and have peace of mind. I do a lot of thinking. Often an awareness of my shortcomings gives rise to despair and I feel like crying. Later, on reflection and reading I feel buoyed up and the future begins to look better. There is a growing inclination towards *bhakti* which I am trying to foster. With God's grace and blessings from you and Vinoba, I will be able to regain zest for life. This letter is written after morning prayers and the thoughts have been set down as they came up. My *pranam* to Pujya Ba. If the Sardar is there, my *pranams* to him. I remember Naraindasbhai very often.

PRANAM FROM JAMNALAL BAJAJ

74. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

JAIPUR STATE PRISONER,

June 15, 1939

PRIYA SHRI KISHORELALBHAI,

You very well know that, on account of my present state of mind and my shortcomings, I do not feel worthy of remaining a trustee and an ordinary member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I had also expressed this view of mine several times in the past. I read the speech delivered by Pujya Bupuji at the recent Sammelan held at Vrindavan published in *Sarvodaya*.¹ Bapuji

¹ At this meeting Gandhiji had said: "A Satyagrahi should have a living faith in God. This is because, except for his unshakable faith in God, he has no other force to help him. How can he wield the weapon of Satyagraha without this faith? If there are any among you who do not have such living faith in God, I would only tell them to give up the Gandhi Seva Sangh and forget the very name of Satyagraha."

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

has expressed his views in very clear terms. And my humble and earnest request to you is to relieve me from the membership of the trust and ordinary membership of the Sangh at the earliest.

My attachment for the Sangh will, however, continue. But on account of my mental condition and spiritual shortcomings, I am now unable to bear this moral responsibility. I trust you will generously relieve this burden on my conscience.

VANDE MATARAM FROM
JAMNALAL BAJAJ

75. *From KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA*

GANDHI SEVA SANGHA,
WARDHA,
June 20, 1939

MURABHI BHAI,

Received your letter. Happy to have received it, but I am not happy with its contents. What kind of justice is it that, because the Jaipur Darbar has harassed you and put you in jail, you should turn your anger on us? You said—I want one year's rest, we replied—well, agreed. You said—I wish to go to some cool spot in the Himalayas, we said—granted. But, instead of going there you picked up a quarrel with the Jaipur Darbar! When they forced you out, you felt compelled to re-enter. Now if you want to continue your Satyagraha there you should concern yourself with reading the Jaipur Government Gazette. Why do you read *Sarvodaya* and start threatening the Gandhi Seva Sangh?

But this has been your habit from your very childhood. You harass those who regard you as their own. Seth Bachhraj adopted you, you accepted him as your grandfather, and then you threatened him that you would leave him and go away.

Having acceded to your own request Bapu accepted you as his fifth son. And now you are saying that you can no longer remain his son. But how can you get away from it? Next you will threaten Jankibehn that you will abandon her. Is it ever possible? In Hindu Dharma adoption and marriage cannot be

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

annulled; similarly the relationship between the Guru and the disciple cannot be severed.

He alone is our shelter
All expectations from him
Indifference towards all else
In one Guru alone our faith and sustenance lie.

For you separation from the Gandhi Seva Sangh and separation from Bapu should mean the same thing.

This is now not possible in this life time, in other words it does not become you. Your next step should be an advance on your earlier one. If your conviction persuades you to believe that what you have done so far is untruth, or has ruined your life for the sake of an unworthy person or cause, you can give it up at any time and you should. But you are not justified in using the name of your weaknesses. After all ultimately what harm will result? You will be deprived of your wealth, comforts and conveniences, you may not remain the sustainer of 50 or 5,000 people; Bapu will turn you into a fakir, possibly even send you to the gallows—so what! Whatever you possess has been entrusted to the sons. Tell Bapu, tell Kamalnayan, tell Jankibehn that you have now decided to join the Gandhi Seva Sangh as a full-time active member after becoming a fakir and giving up all your attachments. And see how inspired you will feel once you take this decision.

The brave man, the pure woman, the wise person who faithfully follows a Guru, do not turn back on their resolve. If evil thought makes them slide back, their lives are forever ruined.

Now that you are in solitude I have every hope that it will help you to arrive at the right decision. If you read the *Sarvodaya* again in this light you will discover a new meaning in Bapu's words.

When you come here after your release, we shall pass a resolution for converting you from a sympathiser member to an active member. By that time I too will have completed my term of five years in office. We shall then have brought the

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Gandhi Seva Sangh to its true state once again. Until then please relax. You may continue with your reading but draw such meaning from it that would help you to rise higher, and not lead you to despair.

If Sasta Sahitya Mandal has not sent you a copy of *Gita Manthan*, do obtain one and read it.

I feel concerned that you have no company in your confinement. But what can be done?

PRANAM FROM KISHORELAL

76. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

JAIPUR STATE PRISONER,
July 4, 1939

PRIYA SHRI KISHORELALBHAI,

At last I got your very affectionate letter of June 6. For your genuine affection, I shall remain grateful all my life. I am unable to put on paper my heart-felt feelings for you. In your letter you have conveyed words of wisdom couched in humour of a very high order, but what can I do? My mind does not permit otherwise. I have no control over it. If sincere blessings from persons like you enables me to acquire control over my mind and I feel certain that the right resolve will abide, then there is the possibility of my regaining my self-confidence. Today, however, I have lost confidence in myself. The more I continue to examine my shortcomings the more my mind tells me clearly (as it has been doing in the past) that I am not worthy to be associated with an organisation so noble and pure as the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I am unable to write more. I request that you may relieve me for once. Pujya Bapuji will support me. He is fully aware of my state of mind.

It was because of my awareness of my shortcomings that I did not adopt Bapu as my 'Guru' nor did I treat him as such, but certainly I have adopted him as my father. That too I did in the hope of possibly getting over my weaknesses. For some time thereafter, I did feel that I was getting over them, but in fact it was not so. These days (that is during the last two years)

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

I have felt considerably harassed, restless and listless. After all amongst Bapu's sons there is Hiralal too. He, poor fellow, is known all over for what he is, while others like me have remained unexposed. You have written that giving up the Gandhi Seva Sangh means giving up Bapu. I am not prepared to accept this. Bapu's other four sons too are not in the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Then, what special merit have I earned to remain in it? Their lot is my lot. Some of them certainly are in a higher state of mind than mine own. Earlier it was my ego that led me to believe that I had been able somewhat to understand Bapu and his teachings. But on deeper consideration it is evident to me that neither had I understood them, nor have I the capacity for it. I had understood the meaning of truth and non-violence according to my own thinking. But now I see my mistake quite clearly. I feel like writing more fully but what more can I write from inside the jail?

From association with persons like you, I have certainly benefited to the extent that perhaps I do not have any particular fear of death. At times I even feel that I could welcome death with enthusiasm. It is right too. If it is not possible to elevate one's present life to a higher level, it should be in one's own interest to consider death as a welcome benefactor. All that I have written truly reflects the stream of thoughts which goes on flowing in my mind. Please do not worry. In my present state of mind no other place will give me greater peace. It is through the supreme grace of God that I have got this opportunity. I am seeing and understanding my own self clearly.

I am afraid that my present state of health might be used for terminating my confinement and thus I may be deprived of the peace of solitude. But I shall take all care and, as far as possible, will not allow this to happen.

VANDE MATARAM FROM
JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

77. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

JAIPUR STATE PRISONER,

August 7, 1939

DEAR SHRI MAHADEVBHAI,

Received your letter. Read the news about your activities in Calcutta in the newspapers.

* * *

Considering the Viceroy's attitude these days, I feel that Bapuji should not go to meet him so long as he does not clearly put down the object of the meeting. Bapuji did well in not going at this time. I am very happy about it. Tell Bapuji that he need not be unduly worried about the Jaipur affair. I am getting acquainted with the true state of affairs here. This place is full of stink. No one thinks he has any responsibility to the people.

Hiralalji and all other friends were released yesterday. No doubt it will take time, but by the grace of God and with Bapuji's blessings the stink will be cleared. In the present circumstances, I feel I shall have to spend a great deal of time here. The Maha-raja has already arrived.

I have been hopeful about him but I do not know whether he can do anything. I have, however, written a letter to him. A meeting with him in the present circumstances does not appear possible. Of the good points of the British, there is little to be seen here. But their bad points are evident at every turn.

Kamalnayan must have spoken to you about my health, etc. It is Shankarlalbhai's nature to get panicky very easily. I, therefore, hope Bapuji will not take him too seriously. You need not come here on account of my health. But if at any time you are able to spend 2 or 3 days here, it will be good because you will then have first hand knowledge of the situation here—especially of the inhuman laws regarding hunting preserves and forests.

You might have seen Radhakrishna's article in the *Nagpur Times* (of 3.8.39). If not do read it. It will give you some idea of the situation. We were very much relieved to know that Bapuji's health is all right.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

It is not at all necessary to get a doctor from Bombay¹. It will be enough if Sushila were to see me on her way from Delhi to Wardha. She will be able to explain everything to you all. The attitude of the officials here being not too helpful, I have started treatment of my burns by a naturopath since yesterday.

I am sending the Harijan Ashram Trust Deed duly signed.

VANDE MATARAM FROM
JAMNALAL BAJAJ

78. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

JAIPUR

September 2, 1939

PUJYA BAPUJI,

The letter I wrote yesterday may have reached you by now. I had a talk with the Jaipur Maharaja yesterday. He gave me to understand that he wishes to appoint an Indian of high calibre as Dewan. He has already conveyed this to the Viceroy. Do you think it advisable that you too should convey this to the Viceroy ? If not, I have a desire to meet him and suggest that under the conditions obtaining in Jaipur at present only a very competent Indian Dewan can deliver the goods. If you do not think this proper or feasible, I would like to write a letter instead, because, so far nothing has been decided about the appointment of the Dewan, but once an appointment is made difficulties will arise. Do write to me your views. I will also continue to think over the matter.

Can you suggest the name of any Indian Dewan who might be acceptable to the Viceroy ? Yesterday I suggested a few names to the Maharaja—the most important among them being that of Sir Kunwar Maharaj Singhji. Will you write to Rajkumari Behn and find out when Maharaj Singhji is returning to India ?

¹ After Jamnalalji had written this letter, he got a telegram from Gandhiji on 9.8.39 informing him that he was sending Dr. Bharucha from Bombay with Mahadev bhai. On receipt of this telegram, Jamnalalji sent a telegram saying that it was not necessary to send the doctor from Bombay for the time being.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

If this post is offered to him, will he accept it ? I have also mentioned the name of Sir Shadilal. Perhaps I might meet the Maharaja Sahib again today.

PRANAM FROM JAMNALAL BAJAJ

79. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

JAIPUR

September 5, 1939

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I tried to talk to Rajkumari Behn at Simla on the phone but could not get the phone connection at her residence. Also I was informed that the line would not be available for 7 to 8 hours, that is why I have sent this express telegram :

“Mahatma Gandhi
Manor Villa
Simla

Arrange Mahadev bhai or Rajkumari phone tonight Jaipur 67 personal. Urge Viceroy if possible for Indian Prime Minister for Jaipur. Inform programme phone number. Jamnalal”

I received at 8.45 p.m. the following telegram sent by you from Simla :

“If easily possible you should attend meeting Wardha 8th—Bapu”

I would have liked to attend the working committee meeting this time but I do not feel like leaving the work in hand here.

I have already met Shri Maharaja Saheb twice and am to meet him again tomorrow at 12.30. I feel confident that the question of lifting the ban on the Praja Mandal will be settled at tomorrow's meeting. So also, perhaps, about lifting the ban on newspapers and releasing the Kisan prisoners from Sikar. In that case I will try to come. The fact is, as a result of my meeting with Shri Maharaja a certain amount of mutual confidence and affection has grown up between us, on the strength of which I am hopeful of solving these and many other problems. But if I were to be absent it is quite possible that the intermediaries

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

may try to create mischief. That is why I am compelled to stay back here.

For the present and so far as Jaipur is concerned, I only wish for your help in getting a capable Indian appointed as Dewan. We will then be able to solve quite a few of our problems by mutual give and take. If you think it proper please write to the Viceroy. I on my part am doing my best.

There is one other thing about which I wish to write to you. Subhasbabu and the Maulana were not in Calcutta, so I could not meet them. But I met Shri Saratbabu and had full and frank discussion with him which, I think, has had a very desirable effect on his mind. He promised to explain things to Subhasbabu and either bring him along or send him on to see you. It would be good if I too could be present at the time. After you have listened to him, whatever formula you evolve should be accepted by him. Sardarji has already sent for him. I have every hope that if you wish, he will very probably agree to follow this course. Will we be compelled to have a confrontation with the British Government on the question of war ? I for one think that this time if all of you were to put forth appropriate proposals with one voice, they are likely to be accepted. It is for you to consider whether or not to put forth any such proposals, but I think we could.

I have sent Chi. Radhakrishna to you. Whatever reply you think proper, please send with him.

I have shifted from the old place and am staying at the New Hotel.

PRANAM FROM JAMNALAL BAJAJ

80. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

JAIPUR

September 10, 1939

Shri Hari

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I have had to put in a good deal of effort in the work here but the result too is turning out to be satisfactory. In my opinion, our demands will probably be fully met, and that too very soon.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

It is also possible that the State may extend its co-operation in other constructive work. As I come to know the Maharaja Saheb more and more, my opinion about him is getting better. What he lacks is able advisers. You will know the latest position from my statement of today. Tomorrow is his birth anniversary; some more points may come to be clarified on the occasion. Making a reference to my statement if you were to write in the *Harijan* that instead of a Britisher an Indian of high calibre should be sent to Jaipur as Prime Minister, it may perhaps have the desired effect on the Political Department. I of course am continuing my efforts. I am still living on milk and fruit. I will stay here upto the 15th and will proceed to Sikar thereafter.

PRANAM FROM JAMNALAL BAJAJ

81. From GANDHIJI

SEGAON, WARDHA (C.P.),
December 3, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I had received your letter. May you complete another 50 years of life and realise your high ideals. Do not at all be despondent. Improve your health there in peace. Everything is going on well here. Kamalnayan had a long talk with me here. Ramkrishna's mind appears to have got fixed on studies. Om is fine. What can one say of Shriman ? He remains devoted to his work. Rajaji arrived today. Andrews is staying here. Dr. Zakir Husain is coming today.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

82. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

6, TODDIWALA ROAD, POONA,
January 29, 1940

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I arrived here the day before yesterday. The treatment was resumed immediately on my arrival. Damodar was also examined by the doctor yesterday. He has promised to give a full report about Damodar after an examination of blood, urine, etc. Madalsa is progressing. She has now been given full permission to walk and move about.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

I showed you the letter which I received from the Home Minister of Jaipur. I enclose a draft of the reply I propose to send him. Kindly see it and make whatever corrections you think necessary. I have wired this morning to Hiralal Shastri at Calcutta asking him to break journey at Wardha on his way to Poona and to see you. According to his present itinerary he will alight at Wardha on Wednesday evening.

In view of the present situation in Jaipur I feel that I too should meet the Viceroy once after your interview with him. If you approve of this idea, kindly tell him during your talks with him that, in case he wishes to apprise himself of the whole situation in Jaipur, I am willing to wait on him to explain matters. If he puts me in touch with the Political Department, I shall be able to explain the situation clearly to them as well. This will be very useful for undoing the harm which is being caused by calumny and misrepresentation outside the State. If you think fit kindly make this suggestion to the Viceroy. If in your view it is better for me to write to him separately, kindly send me a draft of the letter I should address to him.

I had a telephone message from Jaipur last evening informing me that the State police raided the Khadi Bhandar, the Khadi Ashram, the office of the Praja Mandal, and the houses of Shri Patniji and Mishraji. They did not get anything particularly objectionable. Only a copy of a book named *Jaipur Rahasya* was seized. This has created a sensation in the city. The police are thus getting an opportunity to terrorise the people, which may perhaps have an adverse effect on the masses. Seeing this turn of events, my mind is not at ease here. I very much feel inclined to go there and make an effort to tackle the situation.

I also feel like issuing a short statement to the press throwing light on the events which have taken place so far. If you consider the present moment opportune for this statement, kindly send me an appropriate draft for it with Shri Shastriji.

With *pranams*,

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

83. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

[TELEGRAM]

POONA,

January 31, 1940

MAHATMA GANDHI,
WARDHA.

Fresh Jaipur news discouraging. State tactics terrorising and unjust. Feel called upon to go Jaipur without delay. Wire permission. Shall take proper care of treatment.

JAMNALAL

84. *From GANDHIJI*

[TELEGRAM]

WARDHA,

February 1, 1940

JAMNALAL BAJAJ,
NATURECURE CLINIC,
POONA.

Disinclined let you go. Await developments. Take treatment without anxiety. Writing.

BAPU

85. *From GANDHIJI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 1, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter as well as your telegram. I have had talks with Shastriji.

There is no need at all for you to go to Jaipur until the period of your treatment there [at Poona] is completed. Moreover, there is no need for your going there before my mission at Delhi is over. This easily takes us to the 15th inst. How many days will then remain for the treatment to be completed? One has also to recognise the duty of regaining one's lost health.

Your draft is not properly worded. Whatever complaint you have to make would have to be placed before the Maharaja. Hence, I do not see any point in dragging in his name in the

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

complaint. When you are up and doing, you will be able to see him personally. Let things thereafter take their own course.

In my talks with the Viceroy, I shall not be able to go as deep as you wish me to. I can go only so far as it is germane to the main issue. We shall think about your interview after my return from Delhi.

I think this covers all your questions. The rest you will hear from Shastriji. Jankidevi and Madalsa must be having a good time.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

86. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,

February 3, 1940

PUJYA SHREE BAPUJI,

I have had talks with Shri Hiralalji about Jaipur. I was very much intent on going to Jaipur. But now, according to your orders, I will stay on here and take treatment till the end of February.

In my opinion the Home Minister's letter calls for a reply. Hiralalji will show you a reply which has been drafted here, keeping in mind the present situation and future developments. If you approve of it, the letter will go as it is. Otherwise, it will be recast in the manner you suggest.

The co-workers at Jaipur also look forward to a public statement from me. Since, however, in your opinion this step is inadvisable, I have not issued any statement in my own name. Shri Hiralalji, under my advice, has issued a short statement which, of course, he will show you.

In case you have had any talk with the Viceroy about Jaipur—either hopeful or otherwise—if you kindly give a gist of it to Hiralalji he will convey it to me.

Madalsa, Jankidevi and myself are making fairly good progress. Damodar's X-ray was taken; no particular disorder was detected.

With *pranams*,

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

87. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

[TELEGRAM]

POONA,

February 23, 1940

Jaipur Government started adopting repressive measures.
Intend reaching Jaipur after meeting you Patna.

JAMNALAL

88. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

JAIPUR,

April 4, 1940

PUJYA BAPUJI,

Along with Shri Shastriji and Patniji, I have had several interviews with the Prime Minister.¹ He has a narrow outlook and in our opinion he is a person of very reactionary views. During the series of interviews, therefore, certain matters came up which were painful, and occasions also arose when the talks seemed to be coming to an abrupt end. The Prime Minister, however, seems to be hard-working and sincere. If he adopts a reasonable attitude it is likely that things will shape well.

With reference to my letter asking the authorities to withdraw the notification of 9th March 1939, the Council wished to know what items in the notification are objectionable. We had, therefore, to discuss the details of the notification. The Prime Minister made it clear, at the very outset, that he would neither raise any objection with regard to the name of the Praja Mandal, nor would he insist on the condition that an office-bearer of the Praja Mandal should not remain an office-bearer of any organisation outside the State.

Then four points remained. One of these, viz., the eligibility to be a member of the Praja Mandal was cleared up without much difficulty. The second problem, viz., the one about loyalty to the Ruler, was also solved since the demand for responsible Government under the aegis of the Maharaja was taken

¹ Raja Gnana Nath, who succeeded Sir Beauchamp St. John as Prime Minister of Jaipur.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

to imply loyalty to the Ruler. On the third issue, relating to the condition requiring the use of only constitutional means for the redress of popular grievances, there was a good deal of wrangling, but the way now seems to be clear for a compromise. With reference to this item, the Prime Minister emphatically expressed his opinion that we should not directly approach the people but should try to get the grievances redressed through the Government. We plainly refused to accept any restrictions on our freedom of direct approach to the people. It was then that the problem well-nigh reached a stage of agreement. The fourth point refers to the non-affiliation of the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal with organizations outside the State. The Prime Minister insisted on this condition being clearly laid down in the constitution of the Praja Mandal.

Apart from these four points, a serious objection was raised with reference to the object of achieving responsible Government. Nevertheless, when we expressed our firm resolve not to make any alteration in the object, the Prime Minister pressed us to prefix the adjective, 'ultimate' to the word 'object'. An objection has also been raised against the formation of citizens' committees outside the Jaipur State by its subjects living outside its borders.

The main differences have now boiled down to these three issues. We are ready to incorporate all these things into our application for registration of the Praja Mandal, but we are not prepared to prefix 'ultimate' to the word 'object'. We propose to remain firm also on the issue of the formation of Jaipur citizens' committees outside the State. The condition about non-affiliation with outside organisations does not appear sound in principle, though in practice it does not seem to be particularly harmful.

The Prime Minister has gone out of Jaipur today. We will meet him again on his return on the 7th inst. At present the prospects for agreement on the points of difference appear to be hopeful and if an agreement is arrived at, the Prime Minister says he would get a final decision on this question made at the meeting of the State Council to be held on the 10th instant. It

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

has not been possible to interview the Maharaja. It may be possible to see him after the settlement. The Maharaja does seem to have exerted some pressure. At least it is clear that these people are not bent on prolonging the quarrel.

If a settlement is arrived at, I may probably reach there for the Working Committee meeting. If there is no settlement, leaving Jaipur is out of question. Even in case a settlement is made, I may perhaps decide to prolong my stay here by a fortnight or three weeks.

I have sent to you copies of the drafts for the application for registration as well as the constitution. If you have any suggestions to make about both these drafts, you may kindly ask someone to register a personal call for me at No. 67 (at Jaipur) on the 7th instant and convey to me your opinion especially about prefixing 'ultimate' to the word 'object' in the constitution, and non-affiliation with outside organisations.

JAMNALAL

89. From RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 7, 1940

BHAI JAMNALAL,

Your letter arrived by today's post, and I immediately gave it to Pujya Bapuji. He went through it and said that no instructions were necessary. I am, therefore, not ringing you up. Pujya Bapuji is well and immersed in work. He says he will have a talk with you on your arrival here.

I hope you are well, and wish you success in your mission.

Your sister,
AMRIT KAUR

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

90. From *GANDHIJI*

ON THE TRAIN
September 25, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I could read your note on Jaipur only today. I sat down to write on the subject for *Harijan*, but on second thought I felt that I should not write for the present. I gave up the idea in the belief that my writing would draw greater attention on you. However, if you think that my writing will be definitely beneficial, I am prepared to write. How are you and Rajendrababu? I am leaving for Simla, and shall return to Sevagram either on Sunday or Monday.

I hope the work there is progressing to your satisfaction.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

91. From *JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

RAIPUR—GRANT,
DEHRA DUN,
August 26, 1941

PUJYA BAPUJI,

My health, physical as well as mental, is very good. I am getting here an opportunity to live a natural life. I am also receiving Ma's¹ affection to an extent that satisfies me. Ma appears to be a living embodiment of non-violence and love. The atmosphere too is one of prayer, *kirtan* (religious discourses), and silence. Ma, though unlettered, explains even the most intricate subjects very lucidly, and is always full of joy. A good deal has been written about her in Bengali, something has been written in English and Hindi also, but has not yet been published. Jyotish Chandra Roy, who was a devotee of Ma and was known here as 'Bhai' also had some correspondence with you. He is no more. Ma's husband, Bholanathji, who had taken to *sannyasa* under Ma's advice, is said to have been very short-tempered at first, but is reported to have later succeeded in mastering his anger to a great extent. Ma had served him with great devotion.

¹ Mata Anandamayee

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

He too passed away here, in the Kishanpur Ashram. Ma, though she was married, is said to be a life-long *brahmacharini*. She is keen about truth. Life here is simple. There are many learned and cultured persons among her disciples. Ma herself has no desire to establish a sect or cult of her own, but the devotees and followers, as is usual, do put up some sort of pomp and ostentation. The natural scenery here is beautiful. The spring water is beneficial for health. Taking all these factors into consideration, I am negotiating for the purchase of about an acre of land near Ma's present residence. I have an idea to spend two to three thousand rupees on a small house to be put up on this land. Whenever the mind is ill at ease, or there is need for rest, if I can spare the time, I can come and spend some days here in order to get rid of physical and mental fatigue.

I shall have to go from here on the second or third of next month to Hardwar for a couple of days. From there to Nainital. Perhaps I shall be able to meet Bhai Jawaharlal again in about four days. I am going to reach Wardha on the 21st of September without fail. If I had not been prematurely released from jail on account of illness, I should have come out in the ordinary course on the twenty-first of September (because of my simple imprisonment)¹. I will, therefore, report myself to you on that date. If, after taking into account my physical and mental condition, you order me to court imprisonment again, I will take that course; otherwise I shall frame my programme in accordance with your instructions.

I have gained valuable experiences and peace of mind from the visits to Simla and Dehra Dun. I have now come to believe that the pain in my knee is not going to be radically cured, as Dr. Das had told me. The trouble about sitting for stools continues to be nearly as acute as before. Here I go both times to

¹ Jamnalal Bajaj was arrested on 21st December 1940 and sentenced on the same day to 9 months' simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 500. He was placed in the 'A' Class. He was released on 3rd June 1941 on medical grounds.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

the plains with a scraper and a small spade. At times I place two stones near each other and sit commode-wise. Otherwise, I have to press both my hands on the ground to be able to get up. I bathe with cold spring-water. I am happy here. I have my bedding spread on the ground. Oil massage has been given up, because it was difficult to arrange for it as also to find time for it in the routine here. I am certainly careful about the diet. There is no fear of the weight increasing, because I always rise a little hungry from meals. The strength seems to have somewhat increased, but not to the extent that it was before commencing treatment in the jail. I do go out for a walk both morning and evening, but I don't have here the energy for walking which I had in Simla (maybe because the weather here is warm, whereas it was bracing in Simla). I feel that Shri Anandamayee Ma should meet you. If you too feel like it, I will try and make arrangements to bring her to Wardha. As I did not like to be addressed as 'Sethji', I am now being addressed as either 'Bhaiya' or 'Bhaiyaji.' Ma too has liked this.

I have to talk with you on the following topics when I reach there : Ma Anandamayeeji, Subhas Bose, Indu-Jawaharlal, Sir Francis, and my own future programme. I am informing you of this in advance, so that you can conveniently set apart sufficient time for me. Some of the talks will have to be absolutely private.

I have had several talks with Jawaharlal and Indu about domestic matters. It is quite possible that you will have heard about many of these matters even before I reach there.

I get letters from Pujya Rajkumari Behn off and on. She is not keeping well. You are calling her to Sevagram, but I feel she should be asked to go there only after she completely regains her health. I had come to know this to be her own wish, as also that of her brother and sister-in-law. Therefore I am writing this to you as a suggestion. However, you may decide as you deem fit.

With *pranams*,

JAMNALAL

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

P.S.—Madu will read this letter to you and, if you permit her, will keep it with her.

I have just got your telegram. There is no need to send Chi. Shanta just now. She and Jankidevi will come later, if they like. I have sent a telegram to this effect today.

92. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹*

September 21, 1941

BAPUJI,

My programme

(i) Health

Physical — Weight about 155; vitality is reduced; had fever at Nagpur and later at Simla and Kathgodam though it subsided soon. Pain in the knee persists,—it was worse in Nainital. I get tired soon.

Mental—Better than before. I want to turn my mind more towards bhakti because it leads to contentment. Had good peace of mind in Raipur Grant—the surroundings were also congenial. The affection and serenity of Anandamayeeji also were beneficial.

¹ Jamnalalji had started preparing this report on his return from Dehra Dun to be shown to Gandhiji. But, according to his diary, he met Gandhiji at Sevagram the same day before he had completed the report. He talked to Gandhiji about his future programme. We find the following note in his diary about this :

“*Pranam* to Bapu—Discussion. I placed before him four suggestions about my programme :

- i To court imprisonment by offering Satyagraha—Emphatic No.
- ii To do work in Jaipur—No.
- iii To spend time on charkha and *bhajans*, reading, etc., at Paunar or any other place—This, also, is not the right thing to do.
- iv To do *goseva* work for the present if you think it useful and necessary.—I like this work. Definitely it should be done.

Immediately after this, Jamnalalji started to devote himself to *goseva* work. Nine days later, he convened a meeting of the All-India Goseva Sangh at Wardha. It was inaugurated by Gandhiji who blessed Jamnalalji for success in the new responsibility. Near Nalwadi, where a *goshala* was also being run under the supervision of Shri Vinobaji, Jamnalalji had a kutcha hut built for himself, which was named, Gopuri, and started living there.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

93. *From GANDHIJI*

SWARAJ ASHRAM,

BARDOLI,

December 21, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

In accordance with Bhai Jugalkishore's letter the work may be carried on through the Charkha Sangh. We will certainly spend in Kangra as much money as we can. The same about Pilani.

In my opinion Wardha would be the best venue for the coming session of the A.I.C.C. If you agree with me, you may send invitations by wire. The session will have to be held from the day following my arrival at Wardha, and will have to be finished before the 19th.

Indu has come here.

I hope Madalsa is well and the child is growing.

I personally missed you very much at the meeting of the Charkha Sangh, and shall miss you now at the meeting of the Working Committee. I have, however, thought it good not to press you to come over.

I am well and hope you are keeping fit.

You can have the meeting of the Goseva Sangh after 27th January.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

P.S.—Has Jankimaiya arrived there? Hope she has not impaired her health.

94. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

GOPURI, WARDHA,

December 24, 1941

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I just got your letter of the 21st instant. Pujya Rajkumari Behn's letter did reach here yesterday, but I had gone to Bhankhed with Pujya Vinoba. Immediately on my return at 10 a.m. I wired to her to say that the time of the proposed meeting would not be convenient for Wardha, because the buildings would not be vacant during those days. The time is also too short for

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

erecting sheds for three hundred persons, and the expenses also will be very heavy. If you think either Nagpur or Akola as suitable, I can have enquiries made from Poonamchand or Brij-lalji and invitations could be sent accordingly.

I hope either you or Pujya Jajooji will have directly written to Shri Jugalkishoreji.

Chi. Madu and baby are well. Jankidevi and Mother have not yet returned from Sikar.

Is Indu coming here with you?

The Goseva Sangh Conference¹ has been fixed for 1st to 4th February. Sir Datar Singh will of course attend it. I am also inviting some others.

I am having a good deal of peace and zest in my present work of the Goseva Sangh and in moving about in the villages either with Pujya Vinoba or by myself. I am pulling on fairly well. I hope my letter must have reached Shri Maulana Saheb in time.

With *pranams*

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

95. From *GANDHIJI*

SWARAJ ASHRAM,

BARDOLI,

December 24/27 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

How foolish I am, and selfish too. I gave no thought at all to your health. I thought only of my own convenience. I asked your permission, and, without so much as waiting for it, pressed the Working Committee to hold the meeting of the A.I.C.C. at Wardha. In doing so I was guilty of violence, and that too not of an ordinary nature. I made a misuse of your friendship and your generosity. I cannot expiate it merely by apologising to you. True expiration will be made only when I do not show again, to you or to anyone else, the cruelty of which I have been guilty in the present case.

You deserve nothing but congratulations. It was not a small

¹ Jamnalalji had accepted the presidentship of this Conference.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

thing that you had the courage to speak out your mind and admit your limitations. Don't you worry at all over this. Your refusal has only enhanced my respect and love for you—if there was any room left for enhancement.¹

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

96. *From RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR*

BARDOI

December 27, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Received your letter. I have agreed to Poonamchandji's offer on the assurance that he will not give you any trouble at all and because he has the capacity to do this work.² It is far from my mind to give you any trouble in this matter.

Indu will of course come for the A.I.C.C. She feels happy here.

Regarding the States Peoples' Conference, as we had discussed earlier, I have conveyed my opinion that the office should be shifted to Wardha³.

Bapu has not been able to complete this letter; even so he has asked me to send it to you.

In a hurry.

AMRIT KAUR

¹ On receiving this letter from Gandhiji at Wardha on 27-12-41 Jamnalalji was deeply pained as is evident from the entries in his diary. He drafted a reply to it, but as he was not satisfied with it, he decided to despatch it only after consulting Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala. When Jamnalalji met Kishorelalbhai and showed him Gandhiji's letter, Mahadev bhai had already conveyed to him by telephone Gandhiji's sorrow over the affair. Jamnalalji decided to jot down a few lines on the letter which Kishorelalbhai wrote to Gandhiji, and tore off the two letters which he himself had drafted to be sent to Gandhiji.

² Finally the A.I.C.C. meeting was kept at Wardha on January 15. Poonamchand Ranka, President of the Nagpur Congress Committee had undertaken the full responsibility for it on himself.

³ The portion of the letter up to this was written by Gandhiji himself, and the rest was written by Amrit Kaur (under his instructions).

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

97. From JAMNALAL BAJAJ

GOPURI, WARDHA

December 30, 1941

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I have received your letter dated 27-12-41 and today I received Kanubhai's letter.

Shri Punamchand Ranka is making all efforts (to organise the A.I.C.C. meeting at Wardha successfully). He only takes a little advice from me now and then. I have not kept any burden on my mind. With your blessings everything will go on well.

Shri Haribhauji talked to me in brief about the State's Peoples' Conference. Its office could be located at Sevagram or Wardha only if it is possible to have a responsible full-time secretary, otherwise not. Shri Haribhauji has decided to take up only the work of the Charkha Sangh Vidyalaya. After consulting Pujya Jajuji, Deshpande and Radhakrishna I also have given my concurrence. My definite view is that if it meets with your and Sardarji's full approval, you keep Balwantrai with you and have him do this work.....My own opinion for the present is that sister Rajkumariji should be appointed the General Secretary. She should be assisted by Balwantrai or someone like Pyarelal. Then alone is the work likely to progress well, that is to your satisfaction. I for one do not want to hold any position. However, if it is decided to have the office in Wardha or Sevagram I shall be able to help with my advice and to some extent in making arrangements for finance. Otherwise, even that little help seems beyond my present capacity.

I am really not able to understand why *Janmabhumi* has written this way about me. At first I thought that it was all a fabrication of theirs based on hearsay and because, among other things, I was not able to attend the Working Committee meeting. I have written to Keshavdevji in Bombay to find out the facts and write to me. I was even thinking of serving a notice on them. I received telephone calls and enquiries from many quarters. For no reason, anxiety was caused in my circle of

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

friends. I hear that they have apologised or expressed regret in yesterday's issue. I have not seen it so far. I have peace of mind and my work is going on well.

PRANAM FROM JAMNALAL BAJAJ

98. *From GANDHIJI¹*

SILENCE DAY
February 2, 1942

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your question deserves consideration. Is the Goseva Sangh a Hindu religion body or does it cover all sections of the public. If it is meant for all do the followers of other religions accept Go-seva? Or will they? If the association is not of a religious nature, an effort should be made to draw members of all religions to it.

Your list contains no names from other provinces. There is no Goseva activity in the South and similarly, neither in Bengal nor the Punjab. Would you not like to take up anyone from these areas?

I have had no contact with ... Maharaj in recent years, but my experience of him in the past has been none too happy. One or two of his co-workers are good. My own attitude in this respect is that we may accept whatever help he is able to render. He has got his own institution; we should not interfere in its affairs. We should learn from one another and entertain a spirit of fraternity.

Yes, there ought to be a lady on the executive. Do take Manibehn. There is great difficulty in respect of Rajkumari because she will not be able to observe in her home the vows relating to the exclusive use of cow's milk and milk products. If you decide to have a class of associates or sympathisers, persons like Rajkumari can find a place. I shall look into the question of funds belonging to the old Goseva Sangh.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ This is the last letter written by Gandhiji to Jamnalal Bajaj. On the 11th of February Jamnalalji breathed his last.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

99. *INVITATION FROM GANDHIJI
to JAMNALAL BAJAJ'S FRIENDS¹*

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1942

INVITATION

DEAR BROTHER/SISTER,

You are aware how intimate was the relation between Jamnalal and myself. There was no work of mine in which his full co-operation in body, mind and wealth was not available. Neither I nor he were fond of what is known as politics. He got involved in politics because I was in it. But my real politics was constructive work. And his politics also was the same. I had hoped that after me he would fully carry on those works of mine which would be regarded as of special importance. He had also given me an assurance to this effect. But God alone can fulfil man's wishes. Our wishes were not fulfilled. My faith teaches me that in this apparent defeat lies success. Whatever it be, I have now to consider who will take up the work of Jamnalalji and how? You are being put to trouble in order to discuss this problem and if possible to find out a solution for it. There cannot be any pressure on anyone to respond to this invitation. A list of those subjects in which Jamnalalji had taken special interest is appended herewith in chronological order. If you wish to take part in these activities and if it is possible for you to come, then do come. If you are unable to come, there is no need for you to come only for the sake of courtesy.

If you are unable to come owing to circumstances in spite of your interest in these activities, please write in which item and in what manner you would like to take active part. The meeting and discussion will take place on Friday, 20th February 1942 at 2 p.m. It will facilitate matters if you please send a wire in case you are able to come. A list of the invitees is also

¹ This invitation was sent on the fourth day after Jamnalalji passed away. It was written in both Nagari and Urdu scripts.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

enclosed herewith. Only the names of those whom we could remember are given. If some have been left out, they should take it that they have been omitted only through oversight, and obtain an invitation.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

WORK OF JAMNALALJI IN [REVERSE] ORDER
OF TIME

[Taking the last as first]

GOSEVA (*Service of the Cow*)

NAI TALEEM (*Basic Education*)

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

SERVICE OF WOMEN

SERVICE OF HARIJANS

GANDHI SEVA SANGH

KHADI

PRINCELY STATES

RASHTRABHASHA (*Propaganda for Hindi and Urdu*)

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM AND VILLAGE UPLIFT WORK

MARWARI SHIKSHA MANDAL—1910

(*Nav Bharat Vidyalaya and College*)

PART II

LETTERS BETWEEN

MAHATMA GANDHI

AND MEMBERS OF

JAMNALALJI'S FAMILY

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

100. From *GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,
Pushya Sudh 3
[December 18, 1925]

BHAI KESHAV DEOJI¹,

I feel that it would be better if the marriage of Chi. Kamala and Chi. Rameshwar is celebrated at Sabarmati. When a few months ago I consented to the marriage being held in Bombay, I was more anxious in my mind about the good effect it was likely to create in others. But after careful consideration I feel that in such matters the welfare of the bride and bridegroom should be the sole deciding factor. Marriage is a sacrament. It is a new birth for both bride and bridegroom. The holier and more peaceful the atmosphere in which it is celebrated, the better for them. Such an atmosphere can be created only if we give up pomp and lead a life of simplicity. It is possible that this change may not find favour with the ladies in the family. In my opinion, our duty is to do what is right, treating this disapproval as a passing phase. Therefore, I wish you too give your consent to the marriage being celebrated at Sabarmati. I shall not be put to any trouble or inconvenience if it is performed there.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

101. From *GANDHIJI*

Saturday
(February 1927)

CHI. JANKIBEHN,²

That you underwent the operation³ very bravely did not surprise me—it would have if you had accepted defeat. I have always seen courage in you. May it endure for ever! Get well early and observe carefully all the rules so that you will never fall ill

¹ Keshav Deo Nevatia, uncle and guardian of Rameshwar Prasad Nevatia, Jamnalalji's eldest son-in-law.

² Wife of Jamnalal Bajaj.

³ She had undergone an operation for piles on 11-2-1927.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

again. I have work for many sisters who are sound of both body and mind.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

102. *From GANDHIJI*

AMBODI,
NEAR SAVANTWADI, KONKAN,
Monday, April 1927

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

I did not like that Devádas had to come away from you, but I can appreciate that he could not stay on there. Now, perhaps he might return there in a few days.

How is your health? Are you gaining in strength? Have you any trouble?

How are Kamala's studies progressing? Instead of writing yourself, ask Kamala to write to me at length.

There should be no anxiety about my health. It is quite good at present. Are not the old people however, always on the brink of death? They have of necessity to give up the old, worn-out dwelling in one way or another. They may take up their abode in a new dwelling, if they like; or, if they wish to leave the captive state altogether, they may remain in a rarefied state and be free. However, just as a long-term prisoner comes to love his cell, we too do not wish to give up our physical frame because of our ignorant attachment for it. Whether I love the prison that the body is or not, I do not know for certain. My reason, however, sees nothing lovable in it. But reason, poor thing, becomes humbled in the face of illusion. So the truth will be known only at the time of death.

Who are staying with you at present?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

103. *From GANDHIJI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

Received your letter. Why should there be no enthusiasm now? Nowadays you make speeches and your name appears in the press. When I see the name of 'Jankibai Bajaj' in the papers from time to time should it not make me feel that Jamnalal and all of us did well in going to jail and might as well continue to stay there! I always believed that behind your apparent lack of confidence there was full self-confidence. May God strengthen it! Kamalnayan should not be impatient. Let him for the present continue to do khadi work. He should write to Valjibhai when the batch is ready to start.¹

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

104. *From JANKIDEVI*

CALCUTTA,
December 25, 1930

PUJY SHREE BAPUJI,

The work in Bihar is making satisfactory progress. People are suffering in parts of Champaran in the no-tax campaign. Now, staying in Calcutta, I will tour Bengal, move among Marwaris, and work for khadi and abolition of 'purdah', etc. Krishandasji, your secretary, was saying that we should do our work with all our strength as long as it is possible. He was also mentioning whether it would be proper to write to you or not. I told him I am writing in my own language. Merchants here are really testing us. In Nasik, health continues to be good and there is peace of mind.² Kamala and Madhu were with me in Bihar—covering 40 villages in 30 days.

¹ The reference is to a batch of volunteers going to Dharasana to break the Salt Laws in pursuance of the Civil Disobedience movement launched by Gandhiji.

² Wifely reference to Jamnalalji, who was then lodged in Nasik jail.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Ghanshyamdasji has stopped touring, spins regularly. If he comes here, a lot can be done. I am taking care of my health.

PRANAM FROM JANKI

105. *From GANDHIJI¹*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 15, 1932

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

What pride! You have been to jail, but does that mean that you should altogether stop writing letters? As if you alone could have gone to jail! How is your health? Where is Kamalnayan? I have written him a letter but it seems he has not received it.

Where is Balkrishna? I have not received any letter from him recently. It seems as if Madalsa has also gone to sleep. Write to me about Shivaji and Radhakrishna. I have written to Chhotelal but there is no reply from him either. I expect that you would reply for all of them.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

P.S.—All three of us are cheerful.²

106. *From GANDHIJI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 20, 1932

CHI. JANKIMAIYA,

Well, after all, you have taken the trouble of scribbling two lines with a pencil! Have you not been able to get rid of your lethargy even after going to jail? It was a mistake to have placed you in 'A' Class. You should have been placed in 'C' Class and made to work hard. Apart from idleness, you must take proper care to improve your health. It is well that you are not in the clutches of Vinoba. If you do not write you will be punished. Did I tell you that the torn woollen shawl, which

¹ This letter bears the signature of the jail authority indicating that it was seen and passed by him.

² This refers to Gandhiji, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai who were imprisoned together in the Yeravda Jail.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

you mended with khadi cloth, had the honour of visiting the *Rajmahal*¹ also? It is of course with me here, and it is still going to last long.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

107. From JANKIDEVI

WARDHA,
August 1932

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I had received your post-card dated 15th August in which you had enquired about Shivaji and others. I believe you must have got the reply to it.

I have also received your letter of 20.8.32. Om says Bapuji seems to have not much work and he is therefore using high-sounding adjectives.

I knew that my 'A' Class would be an eye-sore to you. Were you wishing for me 'C' Class or one even lower than that?

If you want me to learn cooking, it is just not possible here. There are with me about a hundred sisters from Wardha district who do not allow me to do any work even if I want to, and hence idleness is forced on me. My only fear was: what if I had died by taking 'C' Class diet!

You have been harping on my laziness, but during these five months I have read 20 books, which I had never done in all my life. As soon as I reached here, I was trapped in another jail. I was released on the 4th August and on the 7th I filled up the form for the *Prathama* examination of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Om, Prahlad, and his younger brother Shriram were going to sit for the examination and now Kamal has also been dragged in. As for myself please send your blessings from there so that I may pass the examination.

You always ask others to be kind and merciful, but how much work you are extracting from your ailing hand? You

¹ The Buckingham Palace, London, where Gandhiji had an audience with King George V when he attended the Second Round Table Conference in 1931.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

write that I have been caught in the clutches of Vinobaji, but they were forged by yourself. I might as well give you a piece of news. Of late Vinobaji himself is getting into my clutches. He too will be writing to you today.

You have reminded me of the aged and torn woollen shawl mended by me, but do you think such work can be done if one is lazy? Short of the death sentence, you may give me any punishment you choose.

I am doing well. Kamal is fast regaining his lost weight without any effort. He had lost 44 lbs., and has now regained 35 lbs. It would be well if he does not put on more weight.

PRANAM FROM JANKI

108. From GANDHIJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 19, 1932

CHI. JANKIMAIYA,

It is just because persons like you entertain the fear of dying if you have to eat the 'C' Class food that I have resorted to the method of living without food.¹ You will see this from tomorrow. Even after being fully fed, everybody is dying. We shall see how long you will live eating the 'A' Class food. But how about the art of living even by fasting? There is, however, a condition. All the mothers will have to come out as yoginis and prove the claim of being the power of God by making touchables of all untouchables. Do this and then go on eating the 'A' Class food. If, however, you are not given the 'A' Class diet, you should rest content with the 'C' Class diet.

But supposing the yoginis fail in this, this body made of earth may as well crumble at this moment. I am going to live on. Who will say that I am dead, so long as a single mother is doing my work? We might as well leave aside the philosophy

¹ The reference is to the fast unto death which Gandhiji was to undertake from 20-9-32 as a protest against the provision of separate electorates for Harijans contained in the British Government's Communal Award.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

of the Gita regarding the immortality of the soul. The immortality about which I am talking can be seen even by the physical eye. Therefore beware of getting panicky in the least. Bring lustre to yourself and to others. Be happy by surrendering body, mind and wealth to God. I will not be able to write to naughty Om and wise Madalsa today.

You will take this to be joint letter to you all.

May you enjoy unbroken saubhagya!¹

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

109. From GANDHIJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1932

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

I wanted to reply to your letter in a very jocular vein but where is the time for it now? I had forgotten to write about Kamalnayan which I am doing now. Kamalnayan is very keen on learning English. He desires an educational environment. Hence I feel that he should be allowed to go to Colombo. There he can learn English to his heart's content. He will be both very near and far away. It is not at all true that children will turn out, and remain good only if they are looked after well. We must assume that he was influenced by the *ashram* as much as was needed. If he stays in Newralia in Ceylon, he will have the benefit of its fine climate. And I believe the educational facilities there are very good. You will not have to worry at all. Write to me about this if you wish.

Do not be anxious on account of Jamnalal at all. Keep on sending to me whatever news you receive. I am in regular

¹ The original Gujarat phrase *Akhanda Saubhagya Bhagavajo* is untranslatable into English. It is the greatest aspiration of a Hindu wife to enjoy an unbroken married life, and since separation of the partners in life some day is inevitable—to precede the husband in death, whereby this wish will be fulfilled. The sentence with which this letter concludes is, therefore, regarded as the highest form of blessing one can give to a Hindu wife.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

correspondence over this matter. I am not writing to Madan-mohan separately.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

110. From GANDHIJI¹

YERAVDA,

March 26, 1933

CHI. JANKIMAIYA,

Well! Not even a reply to my letter! Are you so afraid of me? If you feel any hesitation in giving a donation for the Harijans, you should write accordingly. Your purse-strings open while sending me oranges, but do they remain closed for the Harijans?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

P.S.—Jamnalal left for Bombay yesterday, where Dr. Modi will examine him. Of course, his health is good, but he has gone there for your satisfaction as well as his own.

111. From GANDHIJI²

WARDHA,

October 25, 1933

PRIYA BHAGINI

I must congratulate you for going to Calcutta on a mission to persuade sisters there to give up *purdah*. *Purdah* is not only a meaningless custom, but to me it smacks of sin. *Purdah* with whom? Are all men lustful? Can't a woman maintain her chastity without observing *purdah*?

Purity is related to the mind. It ought to be in all men as a matter of course. In this age of enlightenment, if a woman wants to preserve her dharma, she will have to serve *Daridranarayan*, and should educate herself. Service of *Daridranarayan*

¹ This letter bears the signature of the jail authority indicating that it was seen and passed by him.

² This was written to Jankidevi on the occasion of her visit to Calcutta to preside over the All India Marwari Women's Conference. It appeared in *Vishwamitra* (a Hindi Daily of Calcutta) on October 29, 1933.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

means propagation of khadi, spinning, etc. And Harijan service means removing the blot of untouchability. These two things are God's own work. Education can never go side by side with the observance of *purdah*.

Did Sita observe *purdah* during her wanderings in the forests with Rama? Has there ever been a purer woman than Sita in this world?

Appeal to all sisters to discard *purdah* and maintain dharma.

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

112. From GANDHIJI

January 30, 1934

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

If Jamnalal loses his temper owing to mental weakness, is that a reason for you to complain? Should one mind if a patient gets peevish? One must always bear with such peevishness. Or did you write to me only in fun? Tell Madalsa that she seems to have forgotten me altogether. This will not do. Om is cheerful.

How is Ramkrishna? How is your health? Take care of Wali.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

113. From GANDHIJI

WARDHA,

July 21, 1936

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

Your letter is quite good. You must patiently get Madalsa to do whatever you wish of her. You should realise that the time is gone to get things done by showing impatience and anger. Both of you should stay only there at present. Read and write as much as you can.

Regard Ranjit and Saroop as your own children. For the rest, no one can encroach upon your freedom.

Everything is of course all right here. Om is engrossed in her own self and Ramkrishna collects stamps and enjoys

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

himself. Nowadays he does not sleep by my side. And that is only proper.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

114. *From GANDHIJI*

PANCHGANI,
July 31, 1944

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

With God's grace I hope to reach there on the 3rd for taking you to task. I have used the word 'grace' inadvertently; God's grace is always there. If we do not recognise this grace, it is due to our own stupidity. But we, willingly or unwillingly, are under His dispensation. Therefore, if he wills it, we shall meet on the 3rd. It is good that Madalsa and Om will be there. I shall feel Savitri's absence. What to say of Kamala? She is so preoccupied. If I begin filling in more names, I shall have to use another slip of paper, but where is the time for it?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

115. *From GANDHIJI*

YERAVDA,
January 24, 1933

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have gone through your letter to Jamnalalji. Mahilashram or Mahila Vidyalaya so also Vanita Vishram or Vanita Vidyalaya cannot be put under the auspices of the Ashram, because they may not be ready to take in Harijan girls at present. Neither can I impose this burden on them. It should suffice for the present if they are ready to impart education to Harijan girls who come from outside, but such institutions cannot have the patronage of the Ashram. Vinoba's opinion seems to me right and the restriction in respect of Mahila Vidyalaya also appears inevitable.

Tell Jankibehn that I do not see the necessity of having Jamnalalji examined by Dr. Modi at present. His health is fine, his ear is good, his diet is right and he digests it too, his

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

weight has increased. There is no cause for any sort of worry. I do not think that Modi will be able to say or do anything at present. If the slightest necessity is felt or Jamnalalji himself desires it, there will be no difficulty, nor any delay, in making the necessary arrangements. I think it is not good even to take him to Bombay at present. The climate here has suited him; then why have a change only for a few days?

I have received two long pieces of cloth made from yarn spun by Mataji.¹ I shall regard them as *prasadi* from her and use them.

Kamalnayan came but went away without meeting me. He ought to have and could have met me. He must meet me when he comes next. What has happened about his studies? Why does he not write in reply?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

116. *From KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA*

WARDHA,
December 6, 1934

DEAR RAMESHWARJI,²

I am sending herewith the details of the analysis of jaggery supplied by a friend. Revered Bapuji has asked you to get your expert to determine whether it is correct or not. Has its quantitative analysis been done or is it possible to get it done? It will be good if you can obtain specimens of the different varieties, get their quantitative analysis done if possible, and send in a report thereon.

From these analyses we would also like to know the difference between indigenous sugar and the purest mill-made sugar and also between pure and impure sugar.

What constituents remain in the molasses (What is the Indian equivalent of this word?) which are a residue after sugar is manufactured?

Is there any household or simple method for preparing glucose and fructose? What is the process?

¹ Jamnalalji's mother.

² Rameshwar Prasad Nevatia, eldest son-in-law of Jamnalal Bajaj.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

If all this information is available in any books, please also send on their names. I hope you are well. All are well here.

Yours sincerely,
VANDE MATARAM
FROM KISHORELAL

117. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,
December 10, 1934

CHI. RAMESHWAR,

Please send me all information about Ghani. You must give him Rs. 30. I shall write more about it tomorrow. What is the arrangement for his food? Can't you get a good Muslim cook? Even a Christian cook will do. If there is a big railway station nearby, he can go and have one of his meals there. How is the climate there? What is the population?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

118. *From GANDHIJI*

BIRLA MILLS, DELHI,
December 31, 1934

CHI. RAMESHWAR,

I had received your letter. You have done well in writing to me in detail. Do keep writing to me in this manner. As far as possible, teach simplicity to Bhai Ghani. If he wants to come here, let him. We shall consult Dr. Ansari about his tonsils. I have sent a letter through Swami about the sugar mill workers. Please send me a reply. I shall be in Delhi up to the 20th. My address will be care of Birla Mills. I am, however, living on the new land obtained for the Harijans.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

119. *From GANDHIJI¹*

CHI. KAMALNAYAN.

Your handwriting is no doubt well formed, but it is not clear. Your 'દ' and 'હ' look the same. The 'ા' in 'અચ્છા' is incomplete, 'ચ' in 'ચ્છા' has got separated and reads like 'ં'. 'છા' looks like 'ઘ'.

120. *From GANDHIJI*

Y.M.

September 6, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I got your letter. It is well written. If you have enough work there, I do not see the necessity of your going to Ajmer. But you might go if the need for someone is urgently felt there. It is difficult for me to give definite advice from here. What does Mataji say? Decisions pertaining to Dharma can be given only by the group leader. Ask Surendraji who is there these days.

It is practically impossible for me as yet to write a letter in Marathi. I can hardly get time even for reading. Ask Janki-behn to write to me.

Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

121. *From GANDHIJI*

SIMLA,

July 19, 1931

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I had a talk with Kakasaheb about you. You have become quite untidy and irregular. The idea of your having a private tutor is not acceptable to any of us. If you feel that the academic atmosphere at the Vidyapeeth is not congenial to you, there is a school in Poona to which you can be sent. If you agree, I shall make the necessary arrangements. Discuss the matter with Kakasaheb. My own experience is that whoever is really keen on

¹ Reproduced from a copy which is incomplete and undated.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

studying can do it anywhere. Nevertheless, there is not the least intention of stopping you. As far as possible your convenience should be considered.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

122. *From GANDHIJI*

[February 1934]

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I received yesterday the letter in English sent by your father and have already sent a reply. Your letter was received today.

I have advised that you should take the *Uttama* examination in Hindi and acquire a good command over English. If you thus prepare yourself and become a good student and then go to the West, you will derive full benefit. When it is time to go, I would recommend going to America first; after that England, and then the other countries of Europe. Finally Japan and China.

I appreciate that you are not enamoured of examinations. You should stay a year in America and gather thorough experience, improve your English and thereafter stay at other places as you wish. All together you should spend two years abroad. Thereby you will gain a lot of experience and be able to mould your future. Modifications can be made in this programme as a result of later experience. The main thing is that you should give up the idea of proceeding to the West immediately. I think that you will require four years to perfect your Hindi and gain a good knowledge of English. I regard the study of Sanskrit as quite necessary for your Hindi. Four years I do not consider as too long to wait. Blessings to Ramkrishna.

I hope you are taking care of him.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

123. From *GANDHIJI*¹

WARDHA,

June 3, 1935

CHI. KAMAL,

1. Speak little.
2. Listen to all, but do only what is right.
3. Take count of every minute, and do the work of a particular moment in that very moment.
4. Live like the poor. Never take pride in riches.
5. Keep account of every pie you spend.
6. Study with concentration.
7. Likewise, take regular exercise.
8. Be abstemious.
9. Maintain a diary.
10. Strength of heart is a million times more precious than keenness of intellect. Therefore cultivate that. In order to cultivate it, deep study of the *Gita* and *Tulsidas* is essential. Recite the *Bhajanawali*² daily. Pray regularly twice a day.

¹ Before leaving for Ceylon for further studies, Kamalnayan went to Gandhiji for his blessings. It was Gandhiji's day of silence. He therefore, wrote down his blessings in the form of this letter. A happy incident in this connection might be mentioned here :

Mahadev Desai (Gandhiji's secretary) was present when Gandhiji wrote this letter. After obtaining Gandhiji's blessings Kamalnayan turned to take leave of Mahadev Desai. He took the letter from Kamalnayan and, after reading it, said : "You are carrying away with you a great treasure indeed. He has said everything so briefly. You will no doubt give deep thought to it. If only you remember this for your guidance in your future life, you will have nothing to worry about." He then humorously added: "You have everything in you, but you do not know English well enough. Neither are you accustomed to English etiquette and manners. But always remember the two words in the English language: 'Thanks' and 'Sorry'. They should be at the tip of your tongue. Whenever you get an opportunity of using any one of these words, don't fail to do so. If you follow this, you need not worry about their etiquette and manners as such. You will pick them up in the normal course."

² Book of songs of prayer.

TO A GANDHIAN 'CAPITALIST'

11. Now that you are betrothed, you are tied to a tether. Never allow your mind to wander towards any other woman.
12. If you write me a letter every week giving a report of your activities all will be well with you.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

124. *From MAHADEV DESAI*

WARDHA,

June 12, 1935

MY DEAR KAMAL,

Your letter to hand. You did well in sending telegrams to Somasundaram and Bernard. Neither 'kindly' nor 'please' find a place in your telegrams: Is this your Marwadi trait or your ignorance? You must learn good manners. You should make more frequent use of 'thanks' than you have been doing as also of 'if you please'. Make a note of this.

I have received letters from Somasundaram and Bernard. I am sending them to you for your perusal. The translation of the book to which Bernard has referred is my abridged edition of Bapu's Autobiography that I gave you in Poona. Propagate this book among the students there. Propagate Gandhism and be a worthy representative of Bapu and Jamnalalji—this is my blessing to you.

Yours,

MAHADEV

Bernard's wife is ill. Probably she is going to England to see her father. You will also know from Bernard's letter what his condition is; so you should understand everything and act accordingly.

125. *From GANDHIJI*

WARDHA,

July 25, 1935

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have got your frank letter. It is really very good that you admit your faults. Now move a step forward and try hard to get rid of them. You could enter your daily activities in the

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

diary. You can have prayers at least twice a day. *Ramdhun* is of course there. To get rid of laziness, the best thing to do is to prepare a daily routine and stick to it—even if it means less work. Physical exercise should form a necessary part of your daily routine.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

126. From GANDHIJI

WARDHA,

September 4, 1935

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

It is good that your letter, though late, has arrived after all.

A repetition of *Ramnama* without fail will be beneficial to you.

You need not worry that you are not using village-made paper there.¹ It requires a certain amount of fervour on your part, as also an intense spirit of sympathy for the poor. When these become part of your nature, you will take to the use of such things of your own accord. What you do spontaneously and in response to your own inner urge will alone be genuine, and that alone will prove fruitful for you.

While you are there, you will do well not to discriminate between articles of British and non-British manufacture.

Let me make one thing clear about clothing. You are free to give up the insistence on khadi there, if you cannot maintain it out of your own free will. It is open to you to put on whatever dress you find to be convenient and to have it made of any cloth that seems suitable for the purpose. I think this contains an answer to all your questions.

This means that you can, if you like, put on an overcoat, socks and a banian made of foreign or Indian mill cloth. It will not be improper if you make an effort to have all these things made of handspun and handwoven cloth; at the same time an omission to do so will not amount to a sin.

Your main work there is to pursue your studies with all

¹ Kamalnayan was in Ceylon at the time.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

possible care and diligence; to cultivate fearlessness, bravery, steadfastness, perseverance, generosity, compassion and love and in addition to grow in simplicity and humility. Do observe the life of the people there; make good use of every moment of your time; and keep a daily diary.

I herewith return your letter to you.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

P.S.—You will ask me again, if any point in your letter has remained unanswered.

127. From *GANDHIJI*

SEGAON

July 6, 1936

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I am enclosing three letters.¹ These will serve the purpose of thirty. Woodbrooke is in Birmingham. It is a fine institution. Contact them early. While writing this, I felt I should also send you a letter for Prof. Horace Alexander. That will mean four. He is from Woodbrooke. Write to me regularly. Listen to all but do what you think proper and what is in consonance with your aspirations. There is no limit to the temptations there. Bring lustre to your name, and remembering its qualities remain

¹ Gandhiji had sent four letters of introduction for Kamalnayan, one of these, which was addressed to Henry Polak, is given below.

Dear Henry,

This will be presented to you by Kamalnayan Bajaj the eldest son of Jamnalalji. However much we may fight Great Britain, London is increasingly becoming our Mecca or Kashi. Kamalnayan is no exception. I have advised him to take up a course in the London School of Economics. Perhaps you will put him in touch with Prof. Laski who may not mind guiding young Bajaj. Muriel has undertaken to mother him.

Please treat this also as acknowledgement of your letter received some time ago. I am trying to become a villager. The place where I am writing this has a population of about 600—no roads, no post office, no shop.

Love to you all
Bhai*

* Henry Polak was Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa. Gandhiji was called 'Bhai' by everyone there.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

unaffected as does the Kamal (lotus) from the filth surrounding it.¹ Thus will everything turn out well. Do not dive beyond your depth. Do not compete with any one. If you make good use of every moment of yours, you will develop your capabilities to their utmost. Make a deep study of the *Ramayana* and the *Gita*. Read them every day. You will of course be reading the *Gita* in the original, but keep Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial* handy.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

128. From MAHADEV DESAI

WARDHA.

July 7, 1936

MY DEAR KAMALNAYAN,

I send herewith revered Bapu's letter and the enclosures referred to in it. I had posted the letter for Muriel as well as others to your residence. You will receive them by separate mail.

At last you are leaving. You had a long talk with me one day, but thereafter you have not talked to me at all. Later, you went to Calcutta, chose your bride there and returned, but again not a word to me till everything was settled. Well! I do not wish to force myself on you as an elder. Send me only such news which you think I should have. But I shall not stop taking interest in you. I shall always wish for your progress even there and I look forward to your return with all your aspirations fulfilled.

I used to correct your letters in English and return them to you when you were in Ceylon. Now, perhaps, you will correct and return my letters from England. Even then I shall not envy you, but only wish you to progress to that extent. English apart, there are so many other things to learn in England. You must stay there like a lotus in water, or as Bapu has put it, like the lotus keeping clean of the filth surrounding it. Come back thus equipped and earn much more wealth and fame than your father.

X

X

X

Polak is in London. He is a very practical man. He is like

¹ There is a pun here on the name Kamalnayan shortened to Kamal, which means lotus.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

a Liberal in Indian politics, but is a devotee of Bapu. His wife is an excellent lady. If he introduces you to Prof. Laski in connection with your studies, you can follow his advice word to word. Horace Alexander is a very good man who can readily become a friend. Bernard knows him quite well. His advice can be sought in regard to every detail: Which plays to witness, which films to see, which institutions to visit, what all to read, which dailies and weeklies, which persons to be beware of, etc. Contact him too at the earliest opportunity.

Now I shall end my letter. You will receive many letters before your departure and you yourself may have to write many. So why should I lengthen this letter?

Will you send me the books which I may ask for sometimes?

If nothing more, at least acknowledge this letter.

Your well-wisher,
MAHADEV

129. From *GANDHIJI*

SEGAON

February 26, 1937

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I received your letter. You are getting more deeply involved (in your studies) there, and all the people here are talking of recalling you soon. Your father-in-law is importunate. Janki-behn too wishes the same. Even your father is more or less of the same opinion. I personally am neutral for I do not think that you will bring a bride from there. I would not deem it proper to recall you so long as you yourself desire to stay there. If you want to enter business, you should give up the lure for a degree. What will you do by becoming a barrister or even a graduate? As far as I understand you, you mean to earn by yourself and not live on your father's wealth. Nor do you want to become a sadhu. If this is true, your *Purushartha* lies in business. If you accept this, give up the lure of barristership or degree. You must have fairly improved your English by now. But if you are keen on having a degree and wish to get into Cambridge or Oxford, you ought to meet Deenbandhu Andrews.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

All those whom I know at Oxford and Cambridge, I got to know through Andrews; therefore, you must meet him. He will make the necessary arrangements for you. He lives in Cambridge. You know him, of course. Yet I shall write to him, so that when you contact him he will remember you. His address is Pembroke College, Master's Lodge, Cambridge. Whatever you do, do it after giving full thought to it. Be writing to me. You seem to be somewhat lazy in writing.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

130. *From GANDHIJI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.),
November 22, 1945

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I am writing this letter because there is no likelihood of your arriving here before I leave.

You should bear in mind that the Nagpur Bank¹ is an undertaking of Jamnalal's and was started by him with a service motive. His idea was that it should become a Savings Bank for the poor and this should hold good even today. Therefore, this

¹ One of the clients of the Nagpur Bank (founded by Jamnalal Bajaj) became insolvent, in consequence of which the Bank lost about 2 lakhs of rupees. A local Indian language newspaper in Nagpur, while reporting this fact, erroneously stated that the Bank of Nagpur itself was going into liquidation. This created a stir and, fearing that as a result of this false rumour there were likely to be heavy withdrawals, the Board of Directors made arrangements for extra funds to meet any emergency. But actually there were no unusual withdrawals. When Bharatan Kumarappa first heard this news—which subsequently proved to be false—he became anxious about the funds of the A.I.V.I.A. which were deposited with this Bank. Gandhiji had always taken a keen interest in the affairs of the Bank since its inception. When this news was brought to him he “refused to believe the report and to be ruffled.” and advised the A.I.V.I.A. to continue their deposits with the Bank. At the same time he wanted confirmation from Kamalnayan that his confidence in him was not misplaced. Kamalnayan was on tour at the time he received this letter. He immediately cancelled his tour and went to Sevagram to acquaint Gandhiji with all the facts relating to the Bank. This cleared the misunderstanding and Gandhiji was completely satisfied.

Bank should not at all fail. That is to say, the Nagpur Bank would fail only when the Bank of England and the Imperial Bank fail and some unforeseen catastrophe overtakes this country—which means that it should be not the first, but the last, to fail. It ought to establish this credit for itself. The fact of your being an heir of Jamnalal in reality means that his credit is your heritage, and it is solely under this impression that I have advised the Jallianwala Trust not only to keep the present deposits in the Bank but to send in further remittances. I have similarly advised Kumarappa¹ to deposit the A.I.V.I.A. funds also in the same Bank. This confidence should not turn out to be misplaced.

However, as soon as I arrived here yesterday Bharatan gave me an adverse report at the station. He, of course, spoke in a friendly spirit and asked for my instructions as I am the President of the A.I.V.I.A. Kumarappa had written to me whether the funds of the A.I.V.I.A. should be deposited with the ... Bank or not. As Vaikunthbhai had advised the step, Kumarappa had presumed that I would certainly give my assent. I, however, raised a doubt and did not accept the suggestion. Kumarappa had, however, already deposited some money with that Bank. This must now be withdrawn. In doing so we shall have to forego the interest. Suppose, however, the amount cannot be withdrawn even on foregoing the interest? So Bharatan asked for my advice. Kumarappa is not here at present. But I said that, in case the Bank raised an objection, the money should be withdrawn even by taking legal action. Otherwise, I would consider the money to be unsafe.

I do not sufficiently know even now the condition of the... Bank, though I have a faint idea about it. Since, however, I have a dislike and a misgiving about new banking ventures in general, I would never be readily willing to deposit money with them.

Then the question arose as to why the money should be deposited with the Nagpur Bank if not with the...Bank, for the

¹ J. C. Kumarappa.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Nagpur Bank was also comparatively a new venture. This also was true in a way; and then Bharatan added that he had heard reports about the Nagpur Bank being likely to be closed in a month or two, because, it was said, it had suffered a loss, and there was a fear of the depositors losing their money; and therefore, it was advisable for us to wind up our account with the Bank now itself. I did not accept his suggestion and remained firm. However, I felt like probing into the origin of this rumour and inquired of Radhakrishna who happened to be there. His explanation reassured me, and I instructed Bharatan to deposit the funds only with the Nagpur Bank alone.

Nevertheless, I am writing this letter because I felt I must inform you of what has happened, so that you may think over it and be on your guard. It is not an easy thing to be Jamnalal's heir. You are his heir as a son, whereas I am his heir as his adopted father. My interest lies in seeing that his reputation remains unimpaired. You and I will prove to be his true heirs, if the activities undertaken by him not only continue but are carried on with added lustre. It is very likely that you will earn money and be acclaimed as a big business man. But what about the charitable activities which he undertook in the latter part of his life? What about the Bank which he started towards the close of his earthly existence? What about the poor cow? What about khadi? What about village industries? As you know, it was in deference to his wish that I settled down at Wardha, even at the cost of incurring the sweet anger of the Sardar. He could easily have got me ten gardens in Gujerat as against the one in Wardha, but I decided to forego those ten gardens because he could not have got me a Jamnalal there. I do not now wish to allow my mind even remotely to think that I have lost Jamnalal. The key to it lies with you, Radhakrishna and Jankidevi. Jankidevi is unlettered; and the hope of growth which I had entertained in her has altogether dried up after the departure of Jamnalal. I can't, therefore, explain to her the Bank affair; I have not even attempted to do so. Radhakrishna is very shrewd and has a knowledge of practical affairs, but he can't be said to

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

be 'educated'. You have been to England and have built up some reputation as a business man. You have an overweening self-confidence. Anyway I have to look to you as Jamnalal's heir and successor. I would, therefore, like to tell you that you should stake your all in the effort to add to the glory of your father as a philanthropist. If, however, you consider it beyond your capacity to do so, you should humbly warn me betimes. Not every son is able, or chooses, to follow in the footsteps of a philanthropic father. If, therefore, you decide not to tread the path that your father followed, no one will be able to point an accusing finger at you. And who am I to do so? I would, however, as grandfather, tender you advice and administer a warning. Having done so I would silently accept whatever you choose to do.

I have conveyed to you a good deal in what I have written above. Give it deep thought and in any case send me a reply as to whether my advice to Bharatan was correct or not.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

131. *From GANDHIJI*

SODEPUR,

August 13, 1947

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Received your clear letter. I have discussed with Kakasaheb and Nanavati. As you have written it will be good if you give up the secretaryship.¹ But you will continue as a member of the working committee and do whatever is possible.

In my opinion our work is not conflicting with that of anybody else, it is only complementary. What does it matter to us whether somebody approves of it or not! If what we hold is right it surely will prevail. Urdu can never be the national language; nor Hindi even if the stamp of the Union is put on it. Only that language can become the national language which both the communities are able to write and speak.

May Madalsa² retain her good health and Rasgulla³ com-

¹ Of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

² Second daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj.

³ Nickname of Bharat, elder son of Shriman Narayan.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

pletely recover from his illness.

Convene the meeting in Delhi. It is difficult for me to attend.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

132. From GANDHIJI¹

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 20, 1932

CHI. MADALSA,

Received your letter. You may well think that you are full of jealousy and pride, etc. but I do not. From where could you have acquired these defects? Neither Jamnalal nor Janki-behn have them. Nor have you lived in bad company. Nor do you lack anything by way of comforts. Of course, you are short-tempered; I have observed it myself. It is there in Janki-behn also. Moreover, you are physically weak. But you are wise, and therefore you should sincerely try to get rid of your anger. All beings are like ourselves. The same life pervades all. To be angry with anyone is to be angry with oneself. And imperfections cannot stay at all in one who cultivates an urge to serve all living beings. You should therefore develop the spirit of service in you.

It would be good if you write to me regularly.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

133. From GANDHIJI

YERAVDA MANDIR
January 11, 1933

CHI. MADALSA,

You seem to be pulling on well. If you continue like this, you will soon be able to bring your anger and the habit of weeping under control. It is enough if you can digest the food that you take.

The questions that arise in your mind arise in the minds of

¹ This letter bears the signature of the jail authority indicating that it was seen and passed by him.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

all seekers after truth. They get resolved after study and deep thinking. We are the Universe. We are in it and it is in us. God also is within us. Our eyes do not see the air that fills our bodies, but we have the faculty to perceive it. It is possible to develop the faculty of perceiving God and if we do succeed in doing so, we can even recognize God. Vinoba is teaching you this. Be patient.

Tell Jankimaiya that I meet Jamnalal frequently. He is well.¹

BAPU

134. *From GANDHIJI*

POONA,

September 9, 1933

CHI. MADALSA,

Received your letter. You should not entertain the fear that you will become a burden on Vinoba. The duty of a teacher is to remove the imperfections of his pupil. If you had been perfect where was the necessity of taking help from a teacher?

Why are you so afraid about cutting off your hair.² Hair grows again and again like grass. I have seen many girls whose hair grew longer after they had been shaved clean. Therefore, if you have no particular attachment to your hair, get it cut.

Regarding dress, it is not necessary to make any other changes except that you should wear shorts. For a girl like you it should be easily possible to adopt a dress to suit your convenience. We shall however be meeting shortly.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ Jamnalal Bajaj also was in Yeravda Central Jail at that time.

² Trimming of the hair of boys as well as girls had been a subject of discussion for many years in the Ashram. Madalsa agreed to have her hair cut in accordance with Gandhiji's advice, and he himself relieved her of the burden on the eve of Divali, 1933.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

135. *From KASTURBA GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,
August 17, 1941

CHI. MADALSA,

Your letter to hand. I had also received your earlier letter. But as I was ill I was not able to write to you.

You may certainly stay in my room. Is not my house yours as well? You wish to stay with me but now I shall be leaving within three or four days. My health is good at present.

I have become anxious on reading in the newspapers about Jamnalalji's illness. May God restore him to health—that's all. My blessings on your mother.

BLESSINGS FROM BA

136. *From GANDHIJI*

SEVAGRAM
October 15, 1941

CHI. MADALSA,

You have constantly been in my thoughts. That is why, although I rarely get any dreams, I dreamt of you. That has inspired me to write to you. I got this dream three days ago, but am finding time to write only today.

One has to take as much care in bringing up a child as one does while it is in the womb. The quality of your milk depends on the food you eat and the way you live. Just as the milk is affected by the food you take, so also is it affected by your temperament and thoughts. I am writing this from experience and therefore (you should) accept it. Whatever food you take, you should take as medicine and not for satisfying your palate. The pleasure derived from taking such medicines is the real pleasure. It is also nutritive. Don't take the meaning of the word medicine here in the usual sense. Milk could be taken as medicine as also for satisfying the palate. The one nourishes the body, the other weakens it. The child should get proper exercise, air, massage, etc. Don't yield to anybody in this matter. There will be many to pamper the child. Be determined in your mind.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

The purpose of my dream is now fulfilled. I hope you are well and the child is growing. Don't you and mother quarrel, and don't you weep. It may perhaps be desirable that you come and stay here for a few months after you recover.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

137. *From GANDHIJI*

SEVAGRAM

November 21, 1941

CHI. MADU,

You are stupid and will you continue to be stupid? Come here at the first opportunity, not for staying here but certainly to meet me! And thereafter, you can unburden yourself as much as you like and cry to your heart's content. And since I shall be giving you such a fine opportunity to cry, stop crying there. As for the rest, follow the rules I have indicated, and you will always remain happy.

BLESSINGS TO YOU BOTH FROM BAPU

138. *From GANDHIJI*

SEVAGRAM

August 24, 1946

I have not read this again.

CHI. MADU,

I feel pity for you, and also annoyance with you. You have done things that invite pity. Annoyance because you suppressed them in your mind so long.

We should not see other peoples' faults, but only our own. Only thus can life become happy and we remain pure. I have told you to find some such work as will not leave you time even to think of yourself. Mahilashram was one such work. It did not suit you. Therefore you should find some social work that you can do by yourself or along with someone of your choice. If nothing else strikes you, learn all the processes connected with the spinning-wheel. You should read books on naturopathy. These are available in Gujarati and also in Hindi.

Do write to me every Tuesday. And write in detail. You

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

should not get angry with anyone, not even with yourself. Learn to sing Bhajans aloud.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

139. *From GANDHIJI*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I received your letter.

If you see only your faults and only the virtues of others, you will make rapid progress and feel happy knowing nothing like sorrow. We have no right to expect anything of anyone. We are debtors; that is why we took birth. Certainly we are not creditors. If you were to absorb this, you will find the whole world straight and simple. This is no wise talk, but the straight course for making life's stream run smooth.

Many kisses to Rasgulla.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

140. *From GANDHIJI*

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I wish you would not break your promise.¹ If you are busy, you can even drop a post-card.

It is by God's grace that Rajat has recovered from his illness.

Love between husband and wife should be like (that of) intimate friends. It should be wholly passionless. They should share both joy and sorrow. Both should have the strength to bear with each other. They should be mutually generous. Both should be absolutely frank with each other : suspicion should never creep in. One should not hide anything from the other.

I feel this is enough. You ask me for examples when we meet.

To you all,

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ Gandhiji had specifically instructed Madalsa to write to him regularly every Tuesday. She could not do so one occasion.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

141. *From GANDHIJI*

HIRAPUR,

January 26, 1947

CHI. MADU,

Your letters have become irregular. Hope it is not a reflection on your irregularity? Be it as it may, you should be happy and have peace of mind. I would have liked to let you and Ram come here, but I consider it a wrong temptation. If you discount atleast 50 per cent of whatever you read in the newspapers you will be able to understand something of the state of affairs here. Have you not heard the saying : "Distance lends enchantment to the view?" When we have to change to a new village every day, even spectators seem to become a burden. I refuse permission to a good many. And so how can I allow you two? I know that you will not become a burden to me in any way. Still you should exercise self-restraint. Whatever amount of service you do while staying there, I shall count as your participation to that extent in the yajna here. Take care of the children. Keep your body fit. I hope Ram is doing fine. Has he made up his mind about himself?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

142. *From GANDHIJI*

September 2, 1934

CHI. PANDITA OM.¹

This time in your letter you have given me some good advice. But do you yourself act according to your advice? If I do not take rest and do not take the necessary care of my health, how is it possible for me to increase weight at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb per day? If you compare the amount of work which you have observed me doing before with that I am now doing, you will call me lazy and given to sleeping. Is it not good that you are away in Bombay roaming about in the Hanging Gardens and putting on airs? Of course in return you serve Kakaji² a bit. But do

¹ Umadevi, third daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj.

² Om's father, Jamnalal Bajaj.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

you know the story of the Hanging Gardens? In my opinion, it is not a place meant for poor persons like us to go about. Only carefree people go there. Next time you visit that place, do observe and write to me how many poor people you came across there. I got fed up after one or two visits to that place.

It does not matter your doling out advice to me.¹ This is the fate of an adopted father. But I hope, you have not provoked Kakaji.

You seem to have made a mistake in your letter. You tell me that Kakaji's weight is 104. Even I may perhaps exceed this within 4 days. Do you not mean 204? Do you read the *Ramayan*?

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

143. From GANDHIJI

November 7, 1934

CHI. OM,

It is futile to expect a letter from you. Though I have not written to you, you have always been in my mind. I did not at all like your behaviour last time. I did not like your letter either. You had given a lame excuse in it. What have you gained by your being with me during the tour all these months?² Will you take an account of it and write to me? At the time of the last session of the Congress,³ I observed you going about from one end to the other. What a dress you were wearing? There was no limit to my sorrow and anger. You must keep your promise. Never be artificial. You should appear as you really are. Talks are going on regarding your engagement. I want you to express your thoughts freely and frankly about it.

¹ In her letter Om had advised Gandhiji to take complete rest and to increase his weight, etc. Gandhiji frequently used to take advice from children and Om never hesitated to tender advice to him. Gandhiji with a tinge of humour sometimes used to address Om as "Pandita"—meaning a learned woman.

² Om had accompanied Gandhiji for nearly a year throughout his Harijan tour which had just concluded.

³ The reference is to the Congress session held in Bombay in 1934.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Be truthful, think truthfully, speak the truth. If this is beyond your capacity, you give me up.

I will await your detailed letter written in a good hand.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

144. From GANDHIJI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 8, 1935

CHI. OM,

After waiting for so long I have at last received your letter. How is it possible to take you to task? I am accepting whatever you give and I have to content myself with it. Ambujamma also frequently gives information about you. Take full advantage of the splendid opportunities and experience you are getting there. I have no doubt that you will make efforts to improve your English. South India is famous for its music. Learn it properly; and I hope that you will also learn Tamil and at the same time work for the propagation of Hindi there. Also reduce your fat. In brief, now that you have gone to such a far off place, you should bring credit to the great but mono-syllabic name you bear. Surely there must be a purpose in bearing this name, the very utterance of which, according to the scriptures, brings salvation. I wish you live up to this implication of the name. Many of the qualities necessary for this purpose are already in you. If you acquire a few more, you will have conquered the world.

I would like to tell you, if you do not know it already, that like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu is also reputed for correct pronunciation of Sanskrit words. The pronunciation in Maharashtra is no doubt good, but it lacks music. In Tamil Nadu *mantras* are chanted in regular tunes and in a melodious voice. You can learn this with the help of Ambujamma. All this can be learnt without much effort, nor will you have to devote much time for it. May this year prove auspicious to you! Now that you have started writing to me, I wish you to continue to do so regularly.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

145. *From GANDHIJI*

SEGAON (WARDHA),
July 11, 1936

CHI. OM,

I want to start a small library here for which some Marathi books are required. Please send me short Marathi books which are of no use at present either to you or to Madalsa or to anybody else. The books should be suitable both for reading and learning. If the work here does not get going then the books will be returned to the respective owners. If the work does start, the books will be returned after a certain period. The minimum period will be six months; and those books which you can send as gifts, please do send them, and let me have a list of them. I do not want to have a library worth more than Rs. 10. You will therefore understand the type of books that I require. If somebody has Marathi newspapers, I will want them also after they have been used there. There is no question of a big donation in this. There is no need of bothering the elders either. But if persons like you are slightly sympathetic towards the villagers, activities like this can be carried on easily. Do this much with persistence. If you do not feel interested in this, do write to me without hesitation. In that case, I will approach some other persons.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

146. *From GANDHIJI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.),
April 12, 1941

DEAR SIR,

Shri Ramkrishna Bajaj, ex-student, son of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, will offer C. D. on Tuesday 15th inst. at 8 a.m. from Gandhi Chowk, Wardha, by reciting the usual anti-war slogans.¹

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER,
WARDHA.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

¹ Though Ramkrishna (youngest son of Jamnalal Bajaj) was under aged (below 18) at that time, Gandhiji gave him special permission to offer

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

147. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

June 21, 1941

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 10th instant, I have to state that my sons are no longer members of a joint family. Each has his own means. But since there were funds with me belonging to my son Ramkrishna, I send you herewith currency notes

Satyagraha, and he himself sent the above intimation to the Deputy Commissioner. Two days later, on the 14th April (on the eve of Ramkrishna's offering Satyagraha), Gandhiji personally wrote the following statement to be given in the court by Ramkrishna in the event of his being arrested and produced for trial. After writing this statement he called Ramkrishna late at night and explained to him the whole statement sentence by sentence and asked him to draw his attention to anything which he did not like or with which he did not agree, so that the statement could be modified or altered suitably:

Sir,

Mine is a case somewhat out of the ordinary. I am an ex-student. It is necessary to mention this fact in these days of anarchy that prevails in the student world. Though I am under eighteen I have known enough of the student world and the world outside to realise the necessity of discipline in everything. In the step I have taken I have therefore, obtained the blessings of my parents and other elders. Under my parents I have had practical training in non-violence in every detail of life. I have just finished my matriculation examination. I began school work rather late in life. My parents had stopped our regular school work during the non-cooperation days of 1920 when I was not even born. My parents have brought us all up in a free atmosphere. And so when I was minded to go to school and go through the ordinary training, I was permitted to do so. When however the present struggle was started, my mind began to waver and I felt that the practical experience I should gain in the pursuit of freedom would be of far greater value than the ordinary schooling which every schoolboy knows is conceived not so much in the interest of the masses as that of the rulers. If in spite of that knowledge we go through that course it is because it is the only one that has been in vogue for so many years and which serves the purpose of providing a status in life. Such is the fate to which we have been reduced through foreign domination. I have been attracted to the present struggle more for its moral worth than the political. I know that if India can present a completed example of non-violence India will have made a unique contribution to human progress. It is a vision that holds my youthful mind and I would count no suffering too great to achieve an end so noble and glorious.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

for Rs. 300 being the total fines inflicted on him.¹

Yours faithfully,
JAMNALAL BAJAJ

P.S.—I hope the payment of this fine would not lead to Ramkrishna's release.

148. *From GANDHIJI²*

SEVAGRAM
March 23, 1945

CHI. RAMKRISHNA,

I sometimes read the letters that you write to your mother. I frequently get news about your progress and feel happy about the same. I learned only today that I too can write to you. Hence this letter. From your letter I find that you have asked for some underwear. I would advise you to do without it. It is not at all necessary in our climate. If, however, you are already habituated to using it and you cannot give it up, then certainly have it. Is it not our duty to restrict our expenses to the minimum of our own accord and raise our life to the highest level? You should keep on striving for your all round development.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU
(M. K. GANDHI)

149. *From GANDHIJI*

SIMLA
July 10, 1945

CHI. RAMKRISHNA,

I do not generally feel happy at heart when anyone is released from jail, but in your case I do. You have indeed benefited.

¹ This letter was drafted by Gandhiji on behalf of Jamnalal Bajaj in reply to a letter from the District Magistrate, Wardha, demanding payment of the fine of Rs. 300, imposed on Ramkrishna under the Defence of India Rules for offering Satyagraha. In addition to this Ramkrishna was sentenced to 4 months' rigorous imprisonment.

² This letter was written to Ramkrishna when he was in jail.

That is why Gandhiji after signing it in his usual way also wrote down his name in brackets. He wanted to be sure that the letter should be delivered to Ramkrishna by the jail authorities with the full knowledge that it was written by him.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Jail has suited you most of all. The studies which you were able to undertake in jail you could hardly have done outside. I am happy on account of Jankibehn and grandmother. They were pining for you and Radhakrishna. Write to me all the details in a neat hand.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

150. *From GANDHIJI*

SEVAGRAM,
May 16, 1946

CHI. RAMKRISHNA,

You are going to the West,¹ but it is not clear to me what you will gain thereby. Who can avoid being swept away by the present-day current? Think as to what you will take from here and bring back from there. Student life is a period for study and growth.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

151. *From GANDHIJI*

FROM NAOKHALI
December 1, 1946

CHI. RAM,

You have returned with a lot of experience.² Now give the benefit of it to the country as well as to your personal avocation. If I can be free from here, we shall meet. It is no use your coming here. I do not also want to call Mataji here. Only when I have come out of the darkness into the light shall I be able to call Mataji. I hope she and Savitri are keeping very good health.

BLESSINGS FROM BAPU

¹ In 1946 Ramkrishna Bajaj attended the Conference of the International Students' Congress held at Prague as a representative of the All India Students' Congress. On being asked to give a message, Gandhiji wrote this letter.

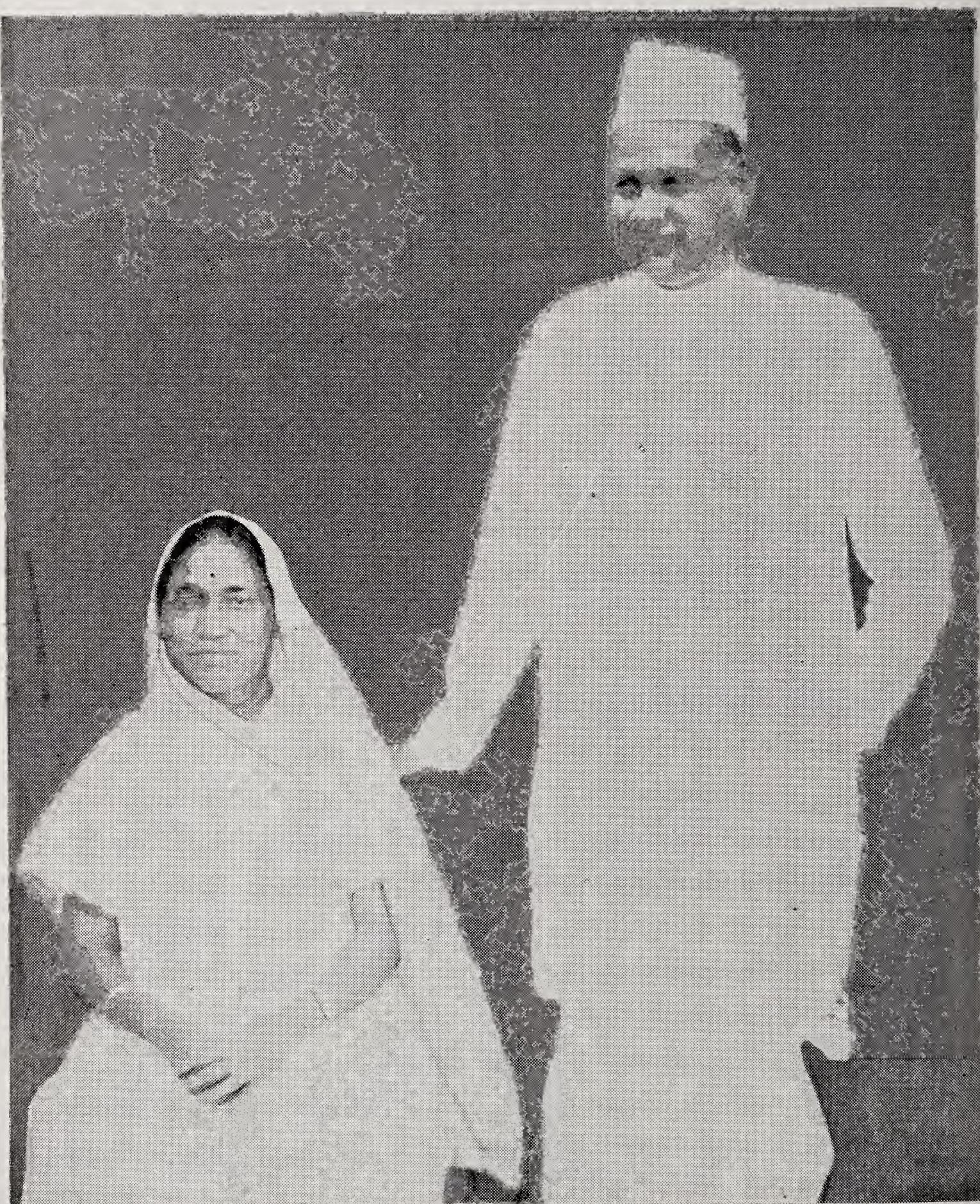
² Just returned from Europe.



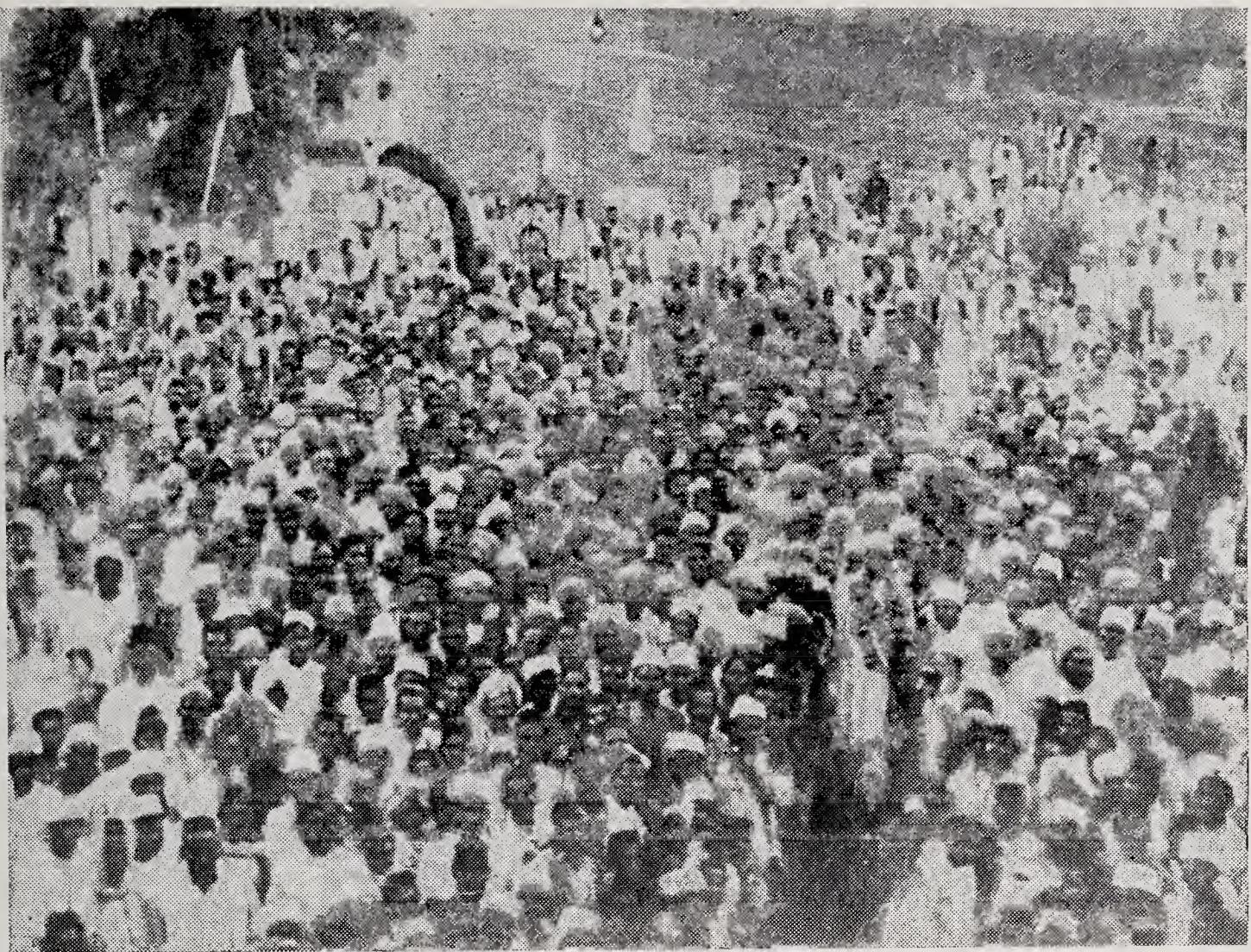
Jamnalal as a
young boy

'Rai Bahadur'
Jamnalal Bajaj
before he came
into intimate
contact with
Gandhiji.
Jamnalalji
subsequently
surrendered
the title during
the Non-co-
operation days

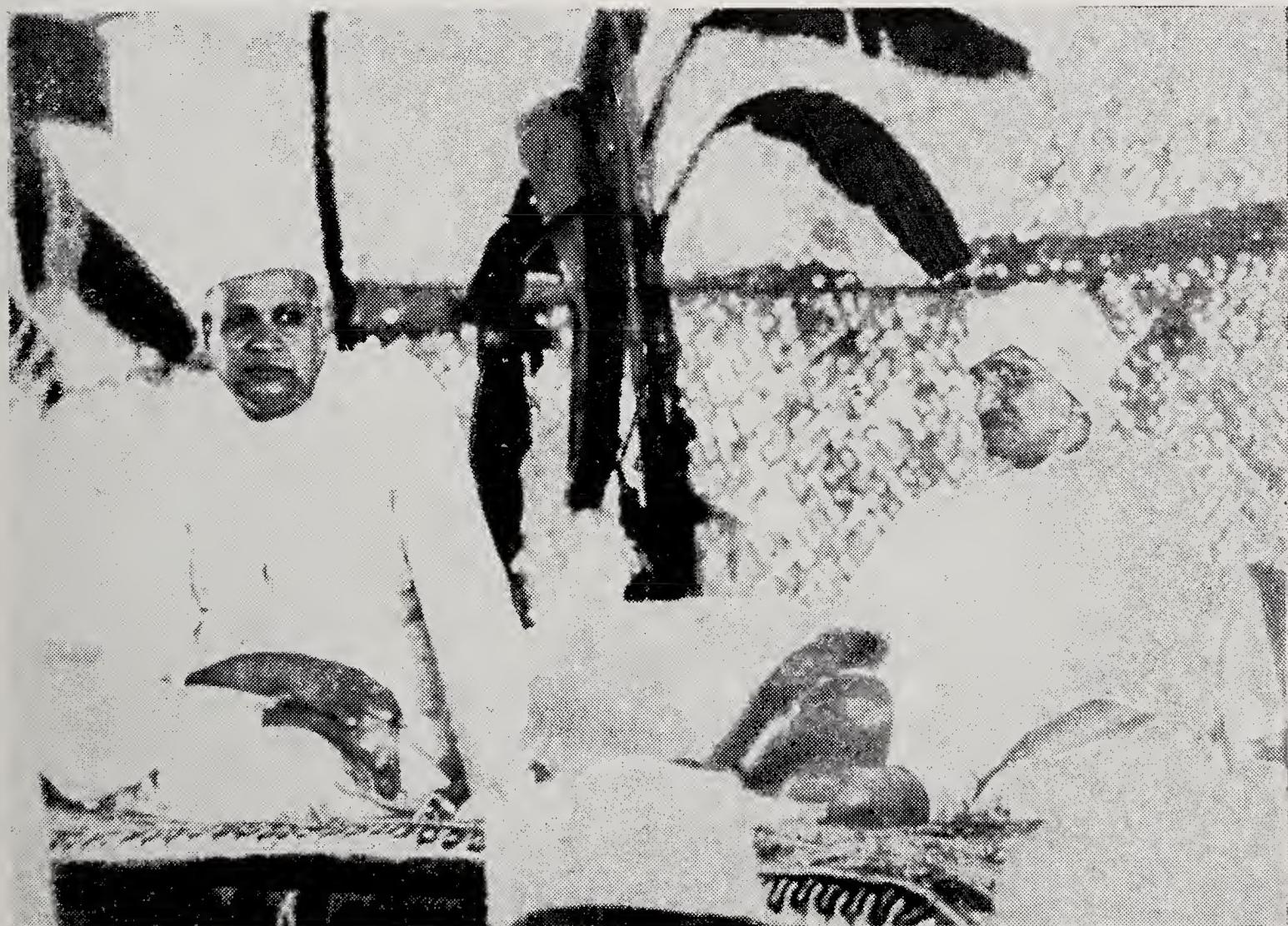




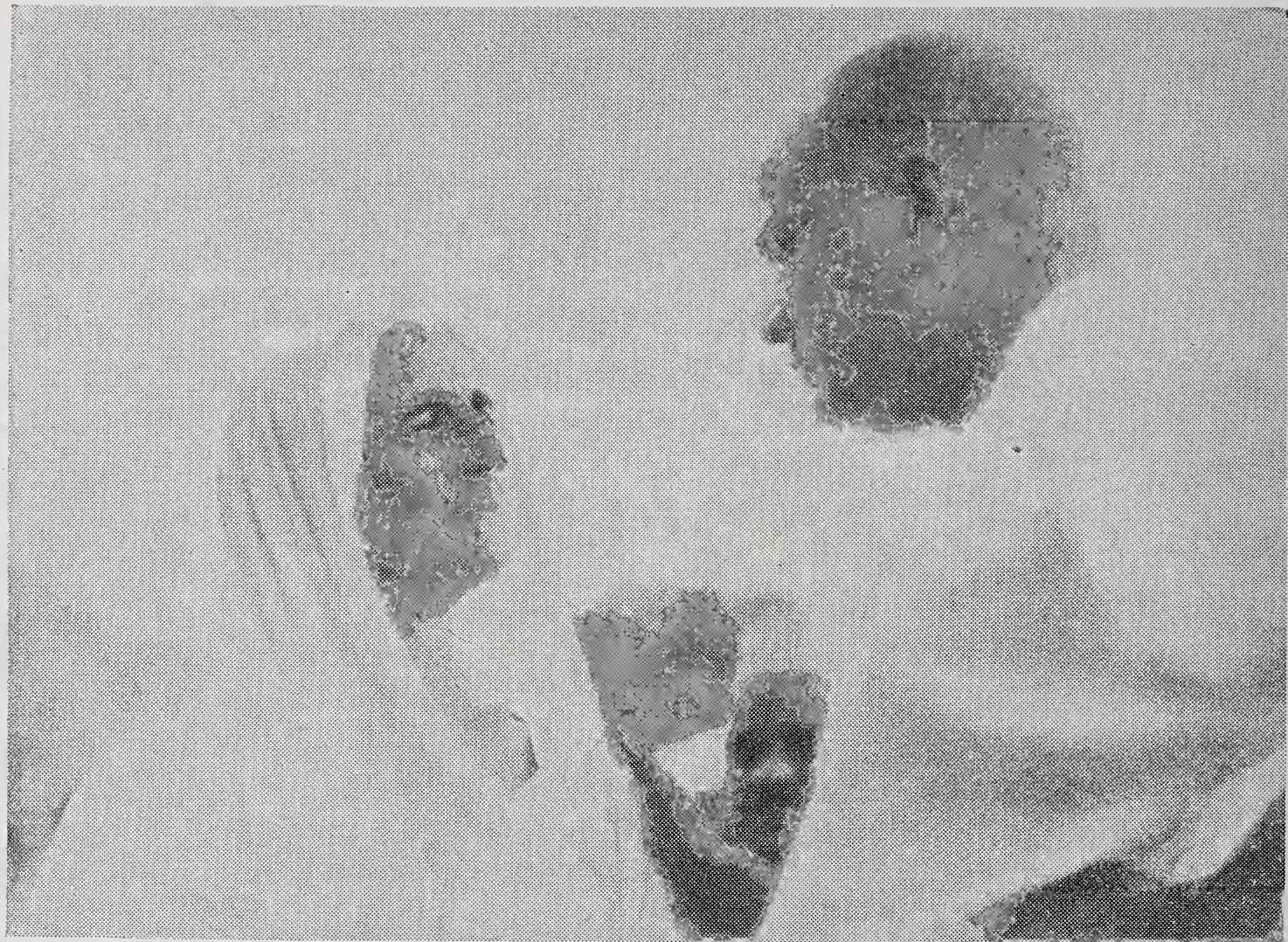
**Jamnalalji with his wife Janki Devi after he surrendered himself to
Gandhiji**



**Reception given to Jamnalalji at Wardha after his release from Nagpur
Jail in 1923**



**Gandhiji and Jamnalalji at the Educational Conference held at Wardha
on 24-10-1937**



Mirabehn and Jamnalalji (1937)



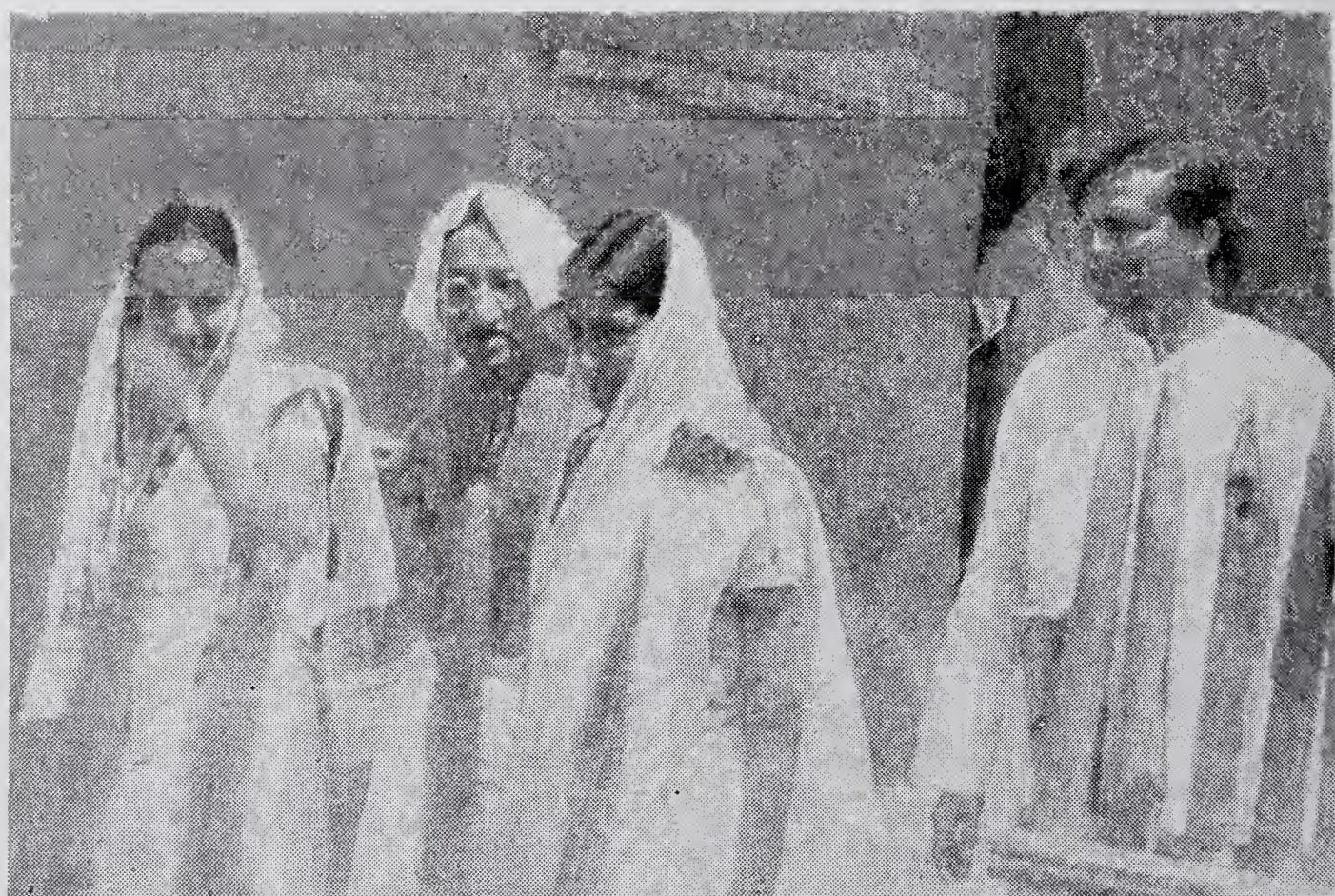
Gandhiji bathing at Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) during his Harijan tour. Umadevi, the youngest daughter of Jamnalalji is with him.



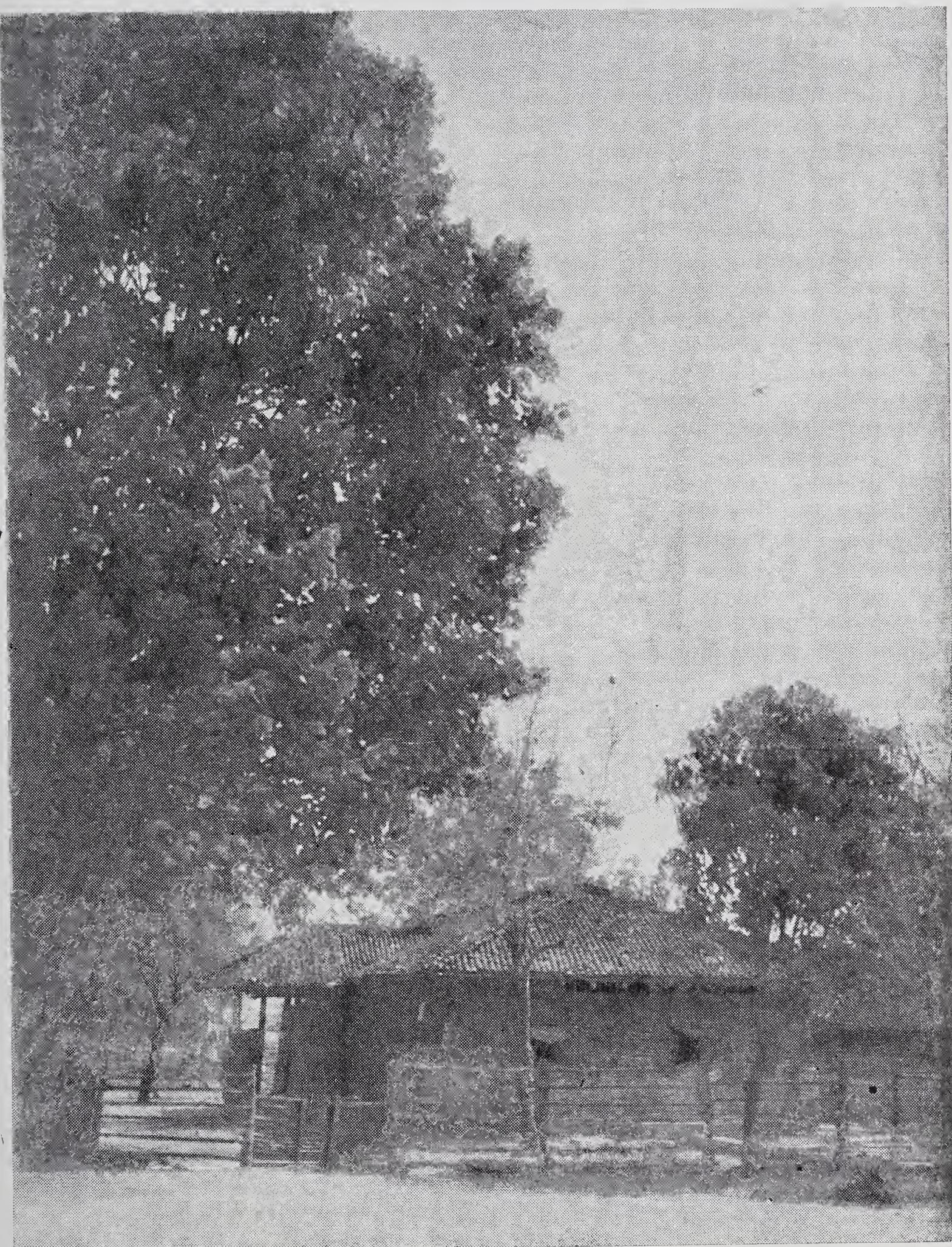
Jamnalalji with Jawaharlal Nehru



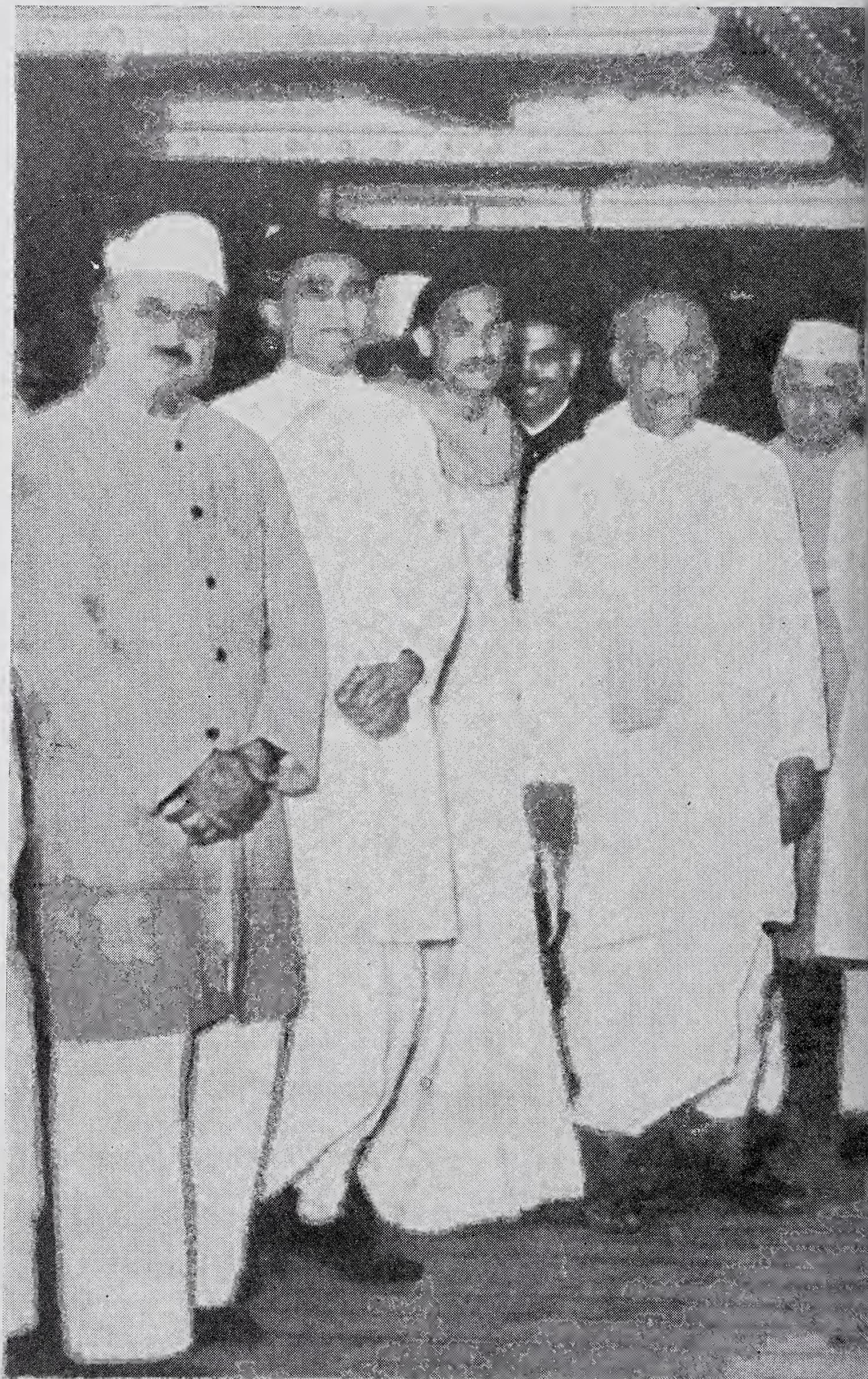
Gandhiji with Jamnalalji's mother Birdibai in Sevagram.



Gandhiji coming out of his hut at Sevagram with Savitridevi, wife of Kamalnayan Bajaj (left), Madalsa Narayan, second daughter of Jamnalalji (right) and Kamalnayan.



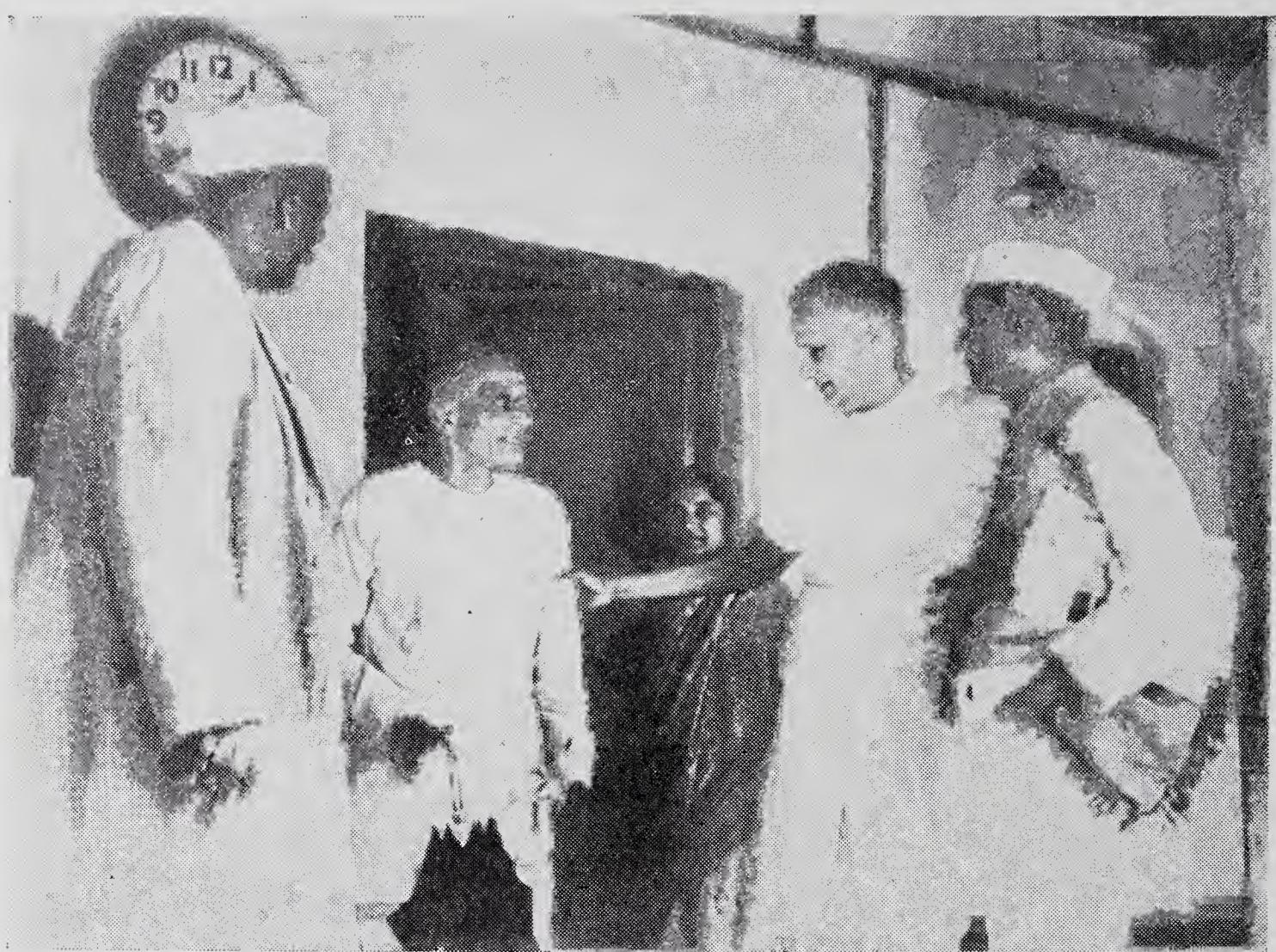
Bapu Kutir in Sevagram



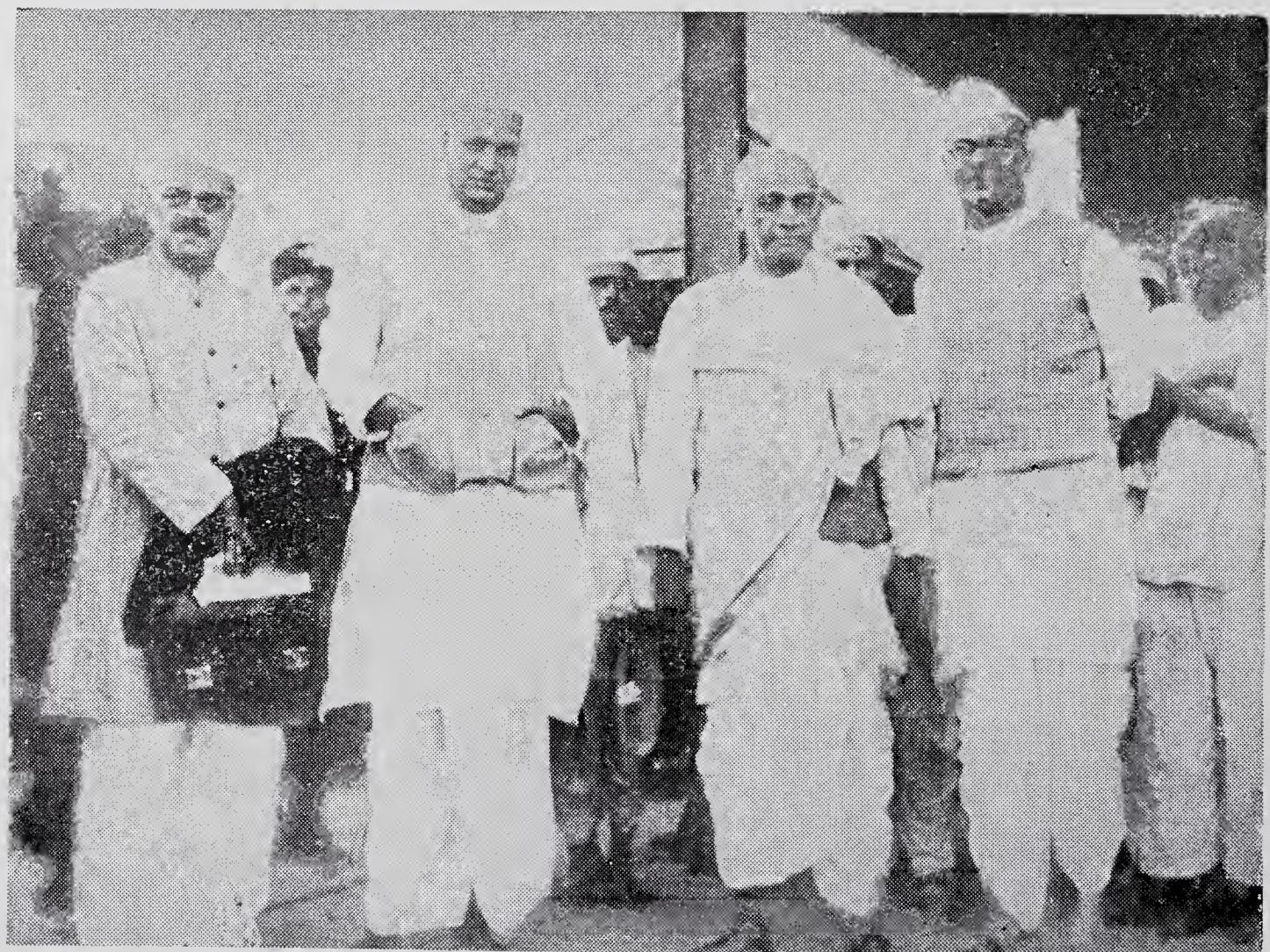
With National Leaders. Left to right : Jairamdas Doulatram, Acharya Kripalani



Sardar Patel, Bhulabhai Desai, Jawaharlal Nehru, Moulana Azad and Jamnalalji



**Left to right : Govind Ballabh Pant, C. Rajagopalachari, Uma Devi,
Jamnalalji and Jawaharlal Nehru**



**Left to right : Jairamdas Daulatram, Jamnalalji, Sardar Patel and Mahadeo
Desai**



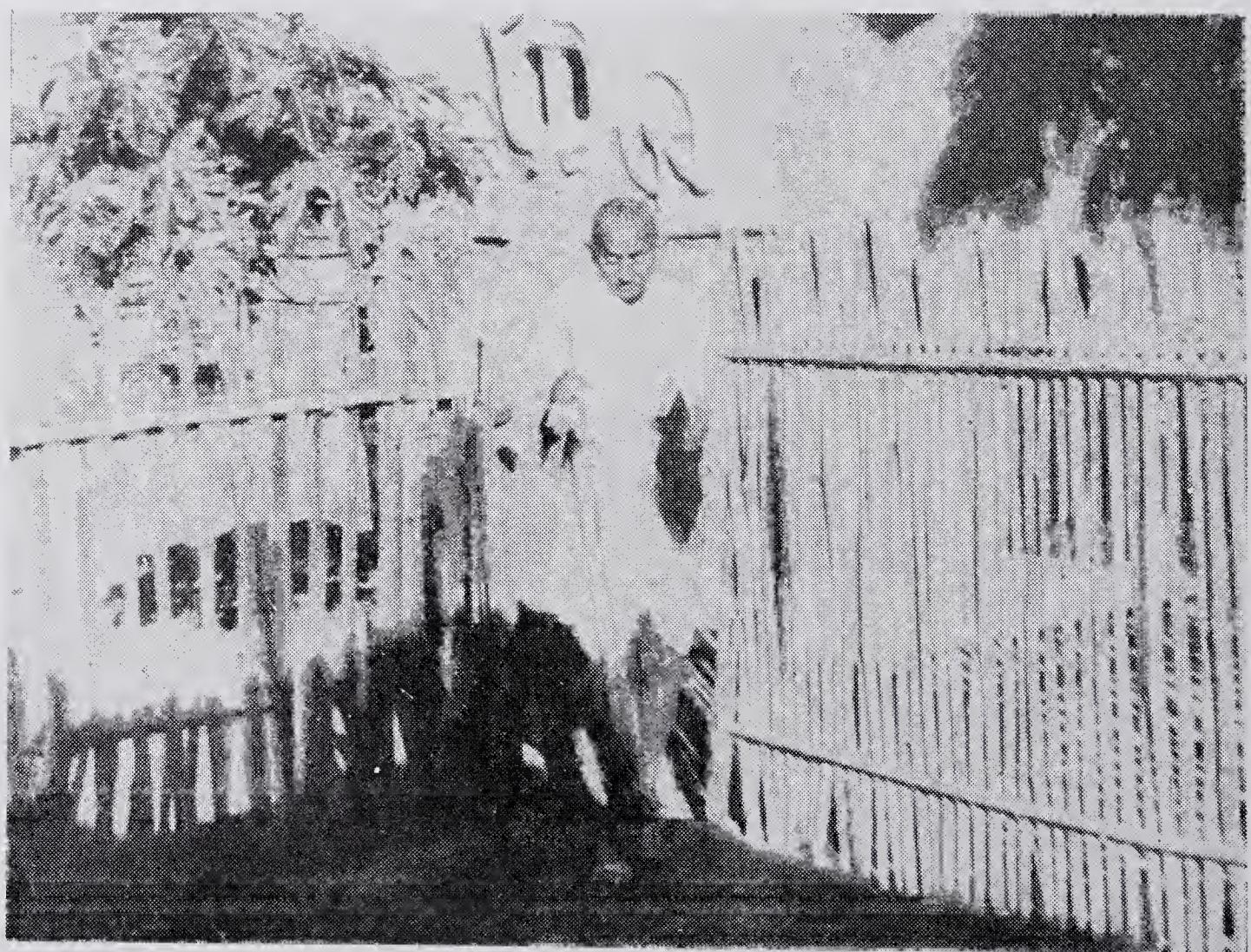
Grinding flour

Jamnalalji in Jaipur Jail.
Wild pigeons had become
so 'friendly' with him
that they used to settle
down on his person to
eat the grains which he
offered.





Jamnalalji and Pyarelal, Gandhiji's secretary, in jail dress in Dhulia Jail as 'C' class prisoners, with Father Verrier Elwin (extreme left) and another friend who had come to see them in the Jail.



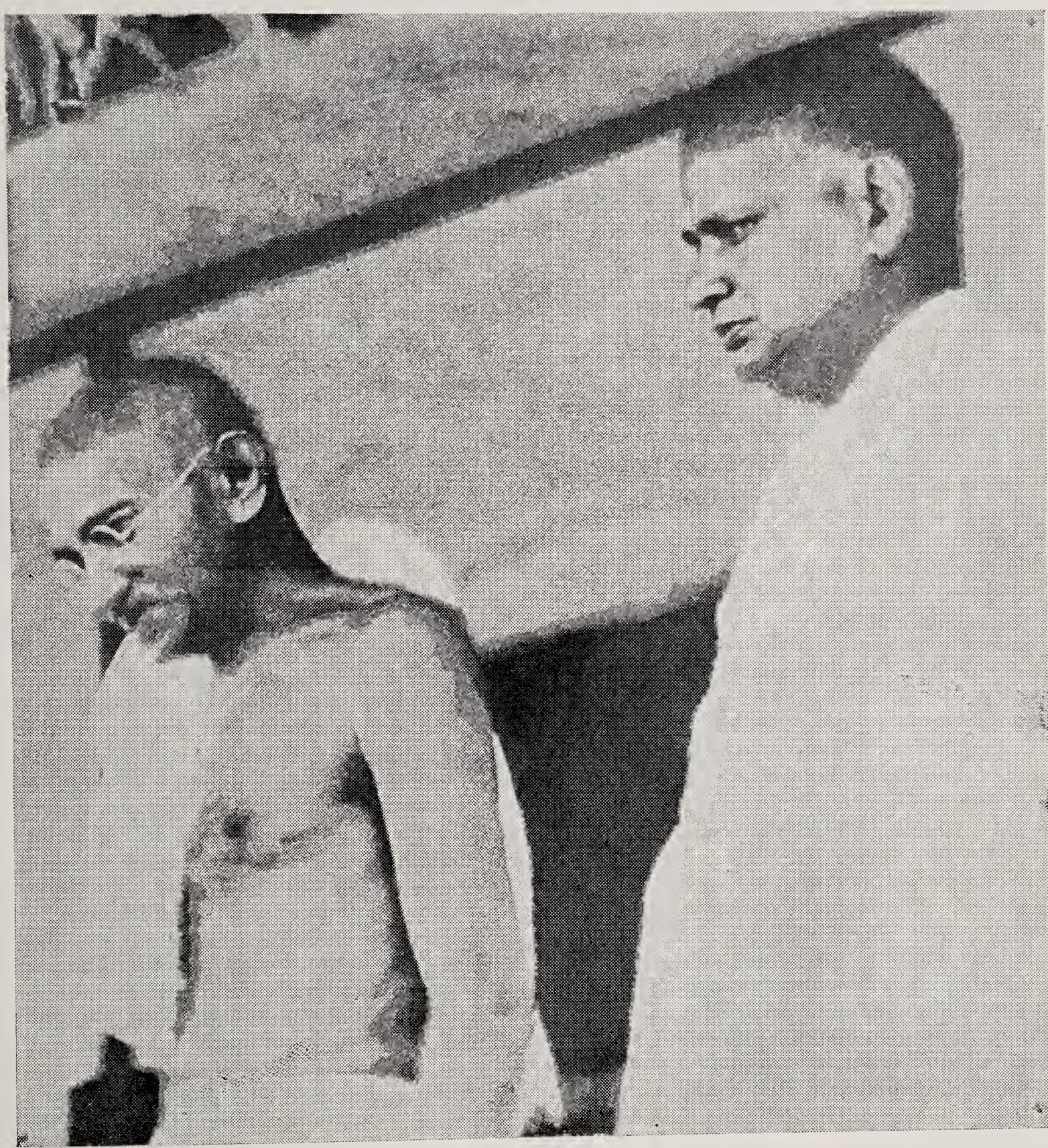
Gandhiji coming out of his hut at Sevagram



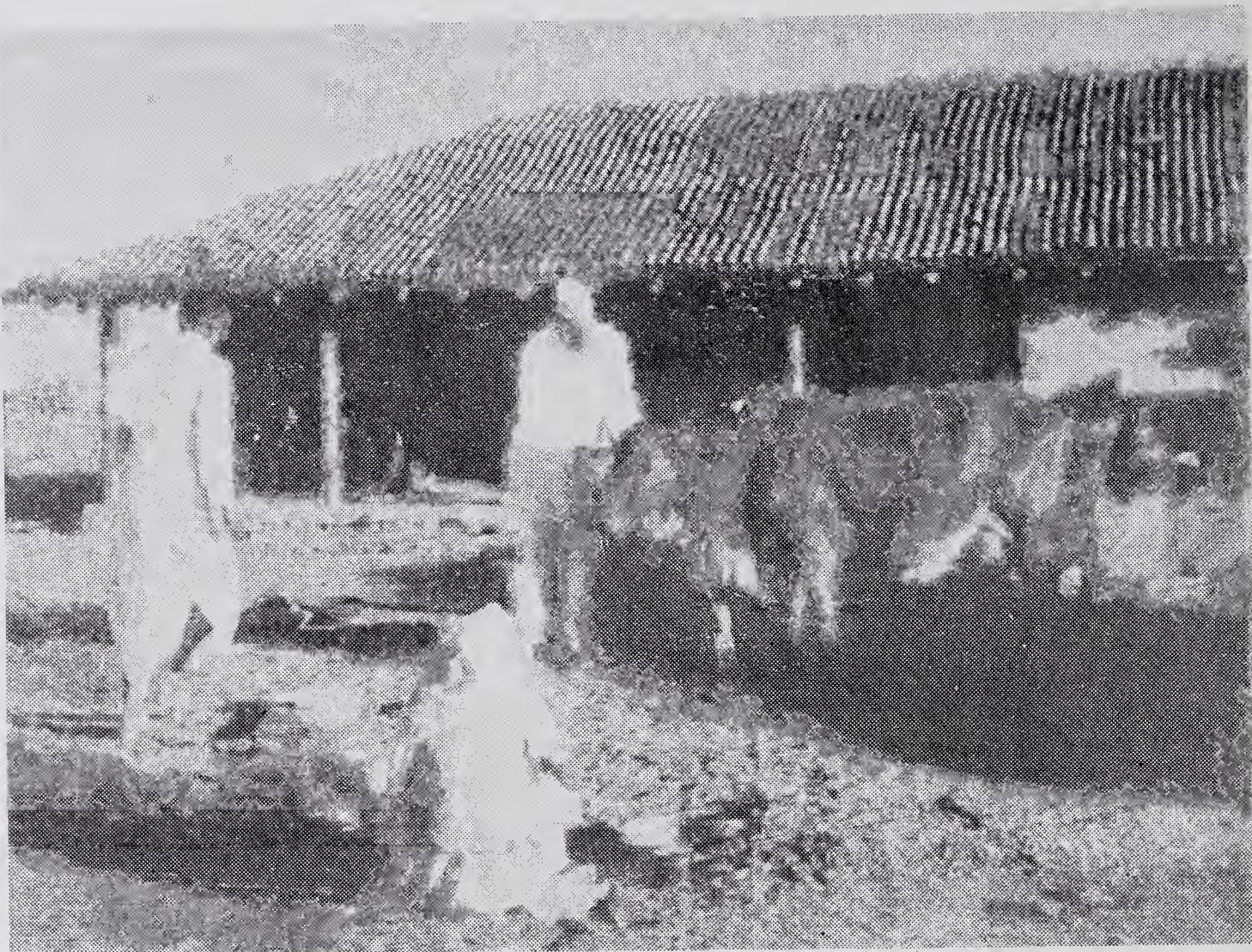
Gandhiji alighting from a third class railway compartment at a station just outside Madras to avoid crowds (January 1946) with Ramkrishna Bajaj



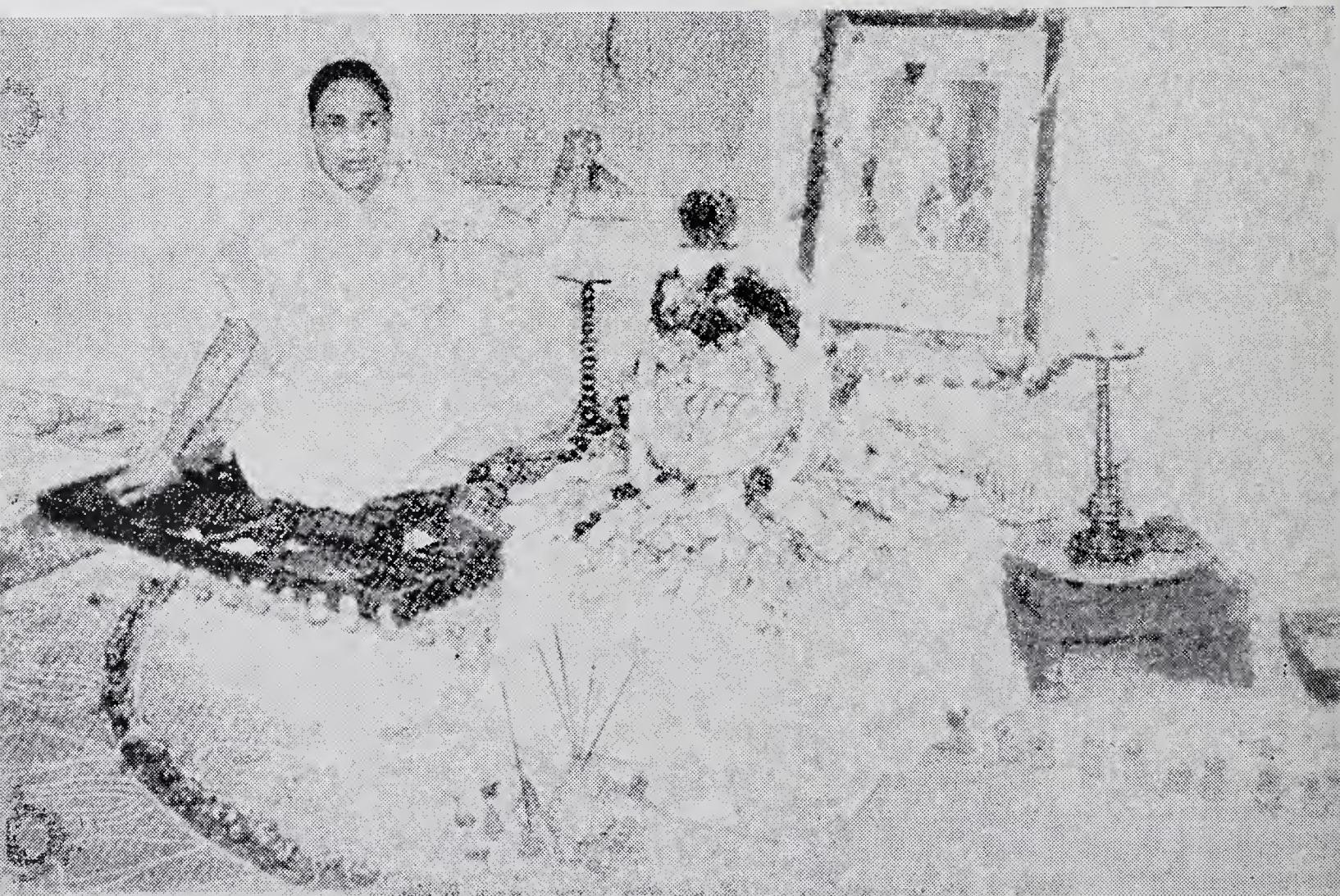
Gandhiji at a prayer meeting at Warangal on his way back to Wardha after completion of a tour of Bengal, Assam and Madras. Kanu Gandhi and Ramkrishna Bajaj chanting Ram Dhun.



Gandhiji and Jamnalaji at Bajajwadi, Wardha



Jamnalalji tending cows at Gopuri



At Gopuri, Jankidevi Bajaj spinning by the side of the urn containing Gandhiji's sacred ashes on the 11th February, 1948, sixth death anniversary of Jamnalalji

PART III

MISCELLANEOUS

LETTERS AND STATEMENTS

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

152. *From LORD LINLITHGOW*

VICEROY'S CAMP,
CALCUTTA,
January 4, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am sorry not to have sent an earlier answer to your letter of 23rd December, but I have been working under very great pressure.

I had hoped that I had made the position on the point you raise clear in my speech to the Associated Chamber a few days ago. As you will have seen I stated in that speech that so far as internal constitutional changes were concerned, while the advice and assistance of the Paramount Power is always available to Rulers, it must be for the Rulers themselves to decide what form of Government they should adopt in the diverse conditions of Indian States, and that, while the Paramount Power would not obstruct proposals for constitutional advance initiated by Rulers, His Majesty's Government have no intention of bringing any form of pressure to bear upon them to initiate constitutional changes. As I endeavoured to bring out in my speech, full weight must be given to circumstances and to the different conditions of different States and while I readily appreciate the closeness of the interest taken in developments in adjoining States by all political parties in British India and not least by the Congress and yourself equally I do not feel any doubt as to the danger of generalisations, or the undesirability of statements of a general character, particularly by the Crown Representative, which might lend themselves to misunderstanding in any quarter. I am confident that you will yourself appreciate this. I am grateful to you at the same time for your friendly communication to me.

Yours sincerely,
LINLITHGOW

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

153. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹*

BARDOLI,

January 7, 1939

Rumours have been going the round as to what I am going to do about the ban on my entry into Jaipur State, my birth-place and ancestral home. The ban is as much a surprise to me as to my friends. My whole life has been passed in the interests of peace in all walks of life. Whatever else non-violence may be with Congressmen, it is my creed and I try as much as it is in my power to live up to it. I am no enemy of States. I have always maintained a friendly attitude towards them. I have always believed the States to be capable of responding to the new awakening that has taken place in India. I am now carrying on correspondence with a view to find out the secret lying behind the ban. The wording of the order in no sense applies to me. I do not wish to act in haste. I have no desire to embarrass the Jaipur State authorities. But, if every honourable effort to have the ban removed fails, the public may depend upon my doing my duty.

My present and immediate object is to afford through the Mandal relief to the famine-stricken in Jaipur State. I hope that the ban will not be allowed to disturb the would be donors. I am making arrangements for all eventualities. Indeed my main reason for going to Jaipur was to devise measures for famine relief.

My second immediate concern is to try to secure the release of the nine prisoners during the recent crisis in Sikar. One of them is convicted and eight are still awaiting trial. I had good grounds for hoping that they would come in for general amnesty. I can only assure them that I shall leave no stone unturned to secure their release while I am still free.

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

¹ This statement which Jamnalal Bajaj issued to the press was drafted by Gandhiji on his behalf.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST,

154. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹*

CAMP BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

To
THE PRESIDENT,
COUNCIL OF STATE, JAIPUR
SIR,

The attached order dated 16th December last was served on me on the 29th of the same month at Sawai Madhopur whilst I was on my way to Jaipur.

The order came as a painful surprise to me. At the station I had over an hour's chat with Mr. F. S. Young, I. G. P., who was persuading me not to commit a breach of the order. I did not need much persuasion as in a discussion with Gandhiji, of the possibility of such an order being served on me, he had advised me not to break the order immediately but to consider the whole situation in consultation with him before taking any final step.

Accordingly I suspended my journey and proceeded to Delhi. After having conferred with friends and fellow-workers and finally Gandhiji, I have come to the conclusion that on the 1st of February next I should commit a breach of the order unless, before then, it is unconditionally revoked.

The authorities knew that a public appeal was issued by me on 1st November last on behalf of the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal, of which I am President, that as famine had overtaken Shekhawati and other areas, relief work was to be undertaken by the Mandal to the exclusion of all other activity. They were also aware that on a newspaper report having appeared to the effect that civil disobedience was to be started in Jaipur, I had issued a flat contradiction.

I do not know what had happened on or before the 16th December to warrant the passing of the order in anticipation of my seeking to enter Jaipur State. I note that on the same date

¹ This letter was drafted by Gandhiji on behalf of Jamnalal Bajaj.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

a notification was published in the State Gazette to the effect that "an emergency has arisen which makes it necessary to provide against instigation to illegal refusal to the payment of certain liabilities". Seeing that the order against my entry was passed the same day, it is reasonable to assume that in the opinion of the authorities I would be connected with the feared movement of illegal refusal of taxes. Surely if the authorities had any fear of my leading such a movement, they might have at least ascertained from me as to the truth or otherwise of the information in their possession. They knew me sufficiently to feel sure that I would not conceal the truth from them.

Indeed the authorities know I rendered help to them also during the recent crisis in Sikar consistently with my obligations to the people. They know that my offices were used entirely on behalf of peace.

My surprise may therefore be better imagined than I can describe it when I learnt from the order that "your (my) presence and activities are likely to lead to a breach of the peace", and that, therefore, "it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquillity to prohibit your (my) entry within the Jaipur State". I have no hesitation in saying that the notice belies the whole of my public career.

I observe that I have been described as of Wardha. I hope this is a slip. For the Jaipur State, surely I am of Jaipur. I do not cease to be of Jaipur because I have interests in Wardha and elsewhere.

It has become a serious question for my co-workers and me to consider our position in the State.

The Praja Mandal was started in July of 1931 and re-organised in November 1936. It has a constitution. It has many distinguished men of Jaipur State as its members. It has hitherto carried on its activities within the four corners of the Jaipur law and submitted even to irksome and illiberal restrictions regarding meetings and processions.

But the order served on me has opened the eyes of the

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST,

Mandal. It has come to the conclusion that it must resort to civil disobedience if civil liberty is not guaranteed and meetings and processions and forming of associations are not allowed without let or hindrance so long as they observe strict non-violence.

I should define the scope of our activity. There is no mistake as to our goal. We want responsible Government under the aegis of the Maharaja. We must, therefore, tell the people what it is and what they should do to deserve it. But we do not propose to offer civil disobedience for it. We must, however, seek the redress of the grievances of all classes of the people; we must carry on constructive and educative activities. The Mandal has no desire whatsoever to preach non-payment of taxes at this stage. If we secure the co-operation of the State in our essentially peaceful and life-building activities and in the redress of admitted grievances, there never need be any resort to non-payment of taxes. But should it unfortunately become a necessity, the Mandal will give the State authorities ample notice of its intention to do so. For the Mandal stands for open, honourable and strictly non-violent methods. Therefore, what I am pleading for is full liberty to the Mandal to carry on its perfectly legitimate and non-violent activities without let or hindrance. If, however, this reasonable request is not granted before the 31st day of this month, I shall reluctantly be compelled to attempt to enter the State in spite of the order, and the Mandal will hold itself free to take such steps as it may deem necessary for self-expression consistent with human dignity.

I hold that to do less will be to commit civil suicide. I trust that the Council of State will not put an unbearable strain upon my loyalty and that of the members of the Mandal.

I have, etc.

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST,

155. THE BAN ON JAMNALALJI

BARDOLI,¹

January 9, 1939

The ban on Jamnalalji makes curious reading. Here it is:
“To

SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
of Wardha (C. P.)

Whereas it has been made to appear to the Jaipur Government that your presence and activities within the Jaipur State are likely to lead to a breach of the peace, it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquility to prohibit your entry within the Jaipur State.

You are, therefore, required not to enter Jaipur territory until further orders.

By order of the Council of State
(Sd.) M. ALTAF A. KHERIE,
Secretary, Council of State, Jaipur.”

He is the last person whose presence anywhere can be a danger. He has ever been known as a peace-maker. He has enjoyed the happiest relations with the official world. His worth was so much recognised that he was awarded the title of Rai Bahadur in 1916 or thereabouts. This he returned during the non-cooperation days. He is one of the best known merchants in the commercial world. He is a banker besides being a commercial magnate. Though an ardent Congressman he has never been known as ‘an agitator’. He is foremost in constructive work and social reform. True he has the courage of his convictions and has more than once staked his all for these. He is never afraid of prison. Obviously the description given in the order served upon Jamnalalji is false and wholly inapplicable to him. It will be probably urged that the wording is a mere formality, and that without it the order could not be legally served upon him. If that be so, it proves conclusively that persons like Jamnalalji were never meant by the law to be affected by it. It is an

¹ This appeared in *Harijan*, 14-1-1939.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

abuse, pure and simple, of the law to keep a person like Jamnalalji out of Jaipur or any other part of the country.

And the humorous part of it all is that Jamnalalji had to be described in the order as 'of Wardha'. As a matter of fact he belongs to the Jaipur State, has property there, and has many relations residing there.

It is to such an order that Jamnalalji has submitted wholly on my advice. There was a rumour that he might be arrested if he attempted to enter Jaipur. He had, therefore, consulted me as to his duty if an order was served on him. His co-workers of Jaipur had held that he should defy any such order there and then. I held a contrary opinion. And I have no cause to regret my opinion. The order, I reasoned with myself, would be a mad act. Mad people should not be taken at their word. They should be given time to cool down. I understand that great preparations were made in anticipation of the arrest. There must have even been a kind of disappointment when the arresting party discovered that they were not to have their prey.

Jamnalalji has lost nothing by waiting and reasoning with the authorities and telling them that they have acted wrongly and hastily. As a responsible man and Jaipur subject, it was perhaps his duty to give them time to reconsider their decision. If they do not, and Jamnalalji decides, as he must, to defy the order, he will do so with added moral strength and prestige. And it is moral strength that counts in non-violent action.

Let it be known that the Maharaja is merely a tool in the hands of his ministers who are all outsiders and some of them English. They know nothing of the people or the country. They are, as it were, imposed upon them. Jaipur talent is at a discount, though before the foreigners came, Jaipur was somehow or other able to hold its own as a State. I had reason to remark last week on the sorry figure the English Dewan cut in Rajkot during his very brief term of office. Atleast the act of the Jaipur Council consisting of outsiders is a sorry exhibition of irresponsibility and ineptitude. The extermnt of one man, however great, may appear to be insignificant. But events may prove

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

that it was a foolish and costly affair, if not much more. For the reader may not know that there is a Praja Mandal in Jaipur which has been working under Jamnalalji's inspiration for the past six years. Jamnalalji is its present President. The Mandal is a strong organisation containing responsible men as its members and has a good record of constructive work to its credit. The Mandal will have to do its duty if the ban is not removed. For the ban is, it is said, a precursor of stopping even the constructive and constitutional activities of the Mandal. The authorities cannot brook the growing influence of a body which aims at responsible Government in Jaipur under the aegis of the Maharaja no matter by means howsoever honourable. It seems to be the precursor also of a ruthless policy of stopping all activities of bodies having political ambition in any shape or form. And rumour has it that it is a concerted policy on the part of the Rajputana States. Whether it is true only of Jaipur or all the other States, it is sufficiently ominous, and Jamnalalji and the people of Jaipur are in honour bound to resist it with all the strength at their command, no doubt consistently with the Congress creed of non-violence and truth.

M. K. GANDHI

156. *From GANDHIJI*

BARDOLI,

January 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

My first thought was to publish the accompanying letter purporting to describe your attitude with regard to the ban on Seth Jamnalalji's entry into Jaipur State but on second thoughts I felt that before making public use of it, I should send it to you for confirmation of the contents. I have no desire to publish it for the sake of agitation. My mission in life is to promote harmony between the Princes and the people and between English officials and the people who are obliged in one way or another to come in contact with them and to secure justice wherever possible by friendly negotiation. And now that I have felt the necessity of writing to you, whatever may be your opinion on

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

Shri Chudgar's letter I would like to suggest to you that the ban upon Seth Jamnalalji and his organisation might be removed without endangering the peace of Jaipur State. Indeed, I feel that peace is certainly in danger because of the ban.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN,
DIWAN, JAIPUR STATE, JAIPUR.

157. *From GANDHIJI*

BARDOLI,

January 26, 1939

(CONFIDENTIAL)

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Your clear reply of the 4th instant in reply to mine of the 23rd ultimo emboldens me to bring to your notice certain happenings as I see them.

In Orissa things seem to be worst. Public opinion there is not so strong as elsewhere and the most unfortunate murder of Major Bazalgette in Ranpur has complicated the situation. The Orissa Government, as has been officially admitted, has rendered every assistance it could have. This unfortunate event apart, out of a total population of 75,000 souls in Talcher, 26,000 have been compelled by sufferings said to be indescribable to migrate to British Orissa.

I feel that it is the clear duty of the Resident to see that the cause of this migration is investigated and redress given to the people.

The Resident in Kathiawad, as far as I can see, has made the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot break his solemn pact with his people published in the form of an official Notification. The struggle has, therefore, been resumed in Rajkot.

The British Prime Minister of Jaipur is said to have vowed to crush Seth Jamnalalji, a well-known banker, philanthropist and social reformer and a socio-political organisation of which (he) is the President. Their crime consists in aiming at responsible Government under the aegis of the Maharaja.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

I take it that the Central Government cannot escape responsibility, if the information given herein is trustworthy. This means that the people of the States have to fight not only their rulers who by themselves cannot resist their people but they have also to combat the unseen and all too powerful hand of the Central authority.

I venture to present this awful problem to you. I call it awful because I do not know how far it will take both the Central authority and the Congress which has a moral duty by the people of the States. I can understand the treaty obligations of the Paramount Power to protect States against danger from without and anarchy within. Is not the corollary equally true, that if the States suppress their people, the latter have also to be protected by the Paramount Power? Can a State suppress free speech, meetings and the like and expect the Paramount Power to help it in doing so, if the afflicted people carry on a non-violent agitation for the natural freedom to which every human being in a decent society is entitled?

I do not expect any reply to my letter unless there is anything to tell me. I know how every moment of your time is occupied. It is enough for me to know, as I do know, that my letters receive your personal attention.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

158. *From JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹*

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

The P. M. of J. [Prime Minister of Jaipur] is reported to have vowed to crush the J. [Jaipur] Rajya [Praja] Mandal and me. In pursuance of that policy, I have been put out of harm's way as they may think. Presently the same fate will overtake the members of the M. [Mandal.] But if we are true to ourselves and

¹ This statement to the press was drafted by Gandhiji on behalf of Jamnalal Bajaj.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

our self-imposed trust, though our bodies may be imprisoned or otherwise injured, our spirits shall be free.

As I go into enforced silence let me reiterate what we are fighting for. Our goal is responsible Government under the Maharaja, but our civil disobedience has not been taken up so as to influence the Durbar to grant us responsible Government. Civil disobedience is aimed at asserting the elementary right that belongs to all societies to speak and write freely, to assemble in meetings, to take out processions and to form associations, etc., so long as these activities remain non-violent. We have been forced to resort to civil disobedience because this elementary right has been denied to us. The moment this right is restored civil disobedience should be withdrawn.

Hence there is no question as yet of mass civil disobedience or a no-tax campaign.

Seeing that the M. [Mandal] has been virtually declared an illegal body, let us regard our existing register to be abrogated. A new register should be opened, if possible within the State and without, if necessary. Those only will become members who know that there is risk today even in becoming members of the M. [Mandal]. It is to be hoped, however, that there will be a large number of Jaipurians living within the State or without who will become members of the M. [Mandal] and thus at least show their disapproval of the ban.

The names, addresses and occupations of these members will be registered and published from time to time.

The affairs of the M. [Mandal] will in my absence be managed by—and they will exercise all the powers of the Mandal and the President as if the constitution was in operation. This council of five will have the right to substitute others in their respective places. In all matters of C.D. [Civil Disobedience] the council will, whenever necessary, seek and be guided by the advice of G. (Gandhi).

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

159. "BARBAROUS BEHAVIOUR"¹

Gandhiji has issued the following telephone report about the second arrest of Jamnalalji who was accompanied by his son, secretary and servant:

"Jamnalalji was detained at Ajmer Road station, 50 miles from Jaipur and kept in the dak bungalow there. Mr. Young went to Jamnalalji in person and asked him to enter his car. Jamnalalji declined, saying, 'You wish to put me outside the border of Jaipur State. I will not accompany you.'

Mr. Young thereupon said: 'We are taking you to Jaipur, come with us.'

Jamnalalji replied, 'I cannot rely on your word.'

Mr. Young then said, 'I have orders. You will have to come with me.'

Jamnalalji asked to be shown the order, but it appears that there was no order in Mr. Young's possession. At length, Mr. Young again told Jamnalalji that he would be taken to Jaipur. 'If we do not take you there, you can have it printed in the newspapers that after promising to take you to Jaipur we took you elsewhere.'

Jamnalalji was not inclined to believe anything that was said to him. He said, 'I will not accompany you willingly. You can take me by force, if you so desire.'

This conversation took nearly an hour. In the end, five men forcibly put Jamnalalji in a car and took him away. In this process of using force, Jamnalalji was injured on his left cheek below the eye. He was taken to Alwar State. Jamnalalji here said, 'You cannot act like this. You are not at liberty to deposit me in another State. If you do so, I will run a case against you.'

On this Mr. Young brought Jamnalalji back again into Jaipur State, but we do not know his present whereabouts."

The only remark I have to offer, says Gandhiji, is that this is barbarous behaviour. The sacredness of person, legal procedure and liberty are thrown to the winds. That a British Inspector-General of Police should resort to deception and then to personal

¹ *Harijan*, 11-2-1939.

injury to one who was his prisoner is what I call organised goondaism. But I know that nothing will break Jamnalalji's spirit. He will enter Jaipur either as a free man or a prisoner.

160. JAIPUR PRISONERS¹

The Jaipur Durbar *communiqué* on the treatment of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and the other prisoners reads like a laboured defence of the *status quo*. The question about Seth Jamnalalji is simple. It is admitted that he is locked up in and out of the way place where the water is said to be 'heavy' according to the Indian notion. It is admitted that the place is difficult of access. He has been given no companion. Why this isolation? Is he a dangerous character? Is he an intriguer? One can understand detention as he chose to defy the ban on his entry into his own birth-place.

The authorities know that Sethji is an ideal prisoner. He believes in meticulous observance of jail discipline. It is cruel to isolate him as he has been isolated from the outside world. The greatest want of prisoners is the companionship of their equals in thought, manners and customs. I suggest that without much ado he be transferred to a place which is easily accessible and healthy and where he is allowed company.

The special pleading with reference to the Satyagrahi prisoners in Lamba is much worse. They admit that the place selected for their incarceration is an old snake-infested fort. But they point out that in spite of the place being snake-infested no one has as yet been bitten by the reptiles! Must the Jaipur Durbar's conscience wait for snake bites before it is stirred to action? It should be remembered that these prisoners were transferred to Lamba because they had the presumptuousness to hunger-strike for better treatment. The strike would have continued but for my intervention.

The much larger question of the object of Satyagraha still remains unsolved. And yet it is not at all large. It is aimed at getting the Praja Sangh recognised. The Durbar have laid down the impossible condition of recognition, viz., that its officials

¹ Gandhiji in *Harijan*, 6-5-1939.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

should not be members of any political organisation outside the State. Thus Seth Jamnalalji himself could not remain President of the Sangh because he is connected with the National Congress. Satyagraha has been suspended at my instance in Jaipur as in many other States. It would not remain suspended for ever. I entertain the hope that the States concerned will placate the advanced and awakened section of their people. And I suggest to the Jaipur Durbar that they are going the wrong way by keeping them locked up even though their Satyagraha has been suspended. In any case what I must call the inhuman treatment of the prisoners, including Seth Jamnalalji, might surely stop at once.

161. From LORD LINLITHGOW

VICEREGAL LODGE, SIMLA,
July 1, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you very much for your letter of 22nd June. It raises one or two points on which I should like to touch in my reply.

As regards Jaipur, the Durbar have, I am quite sure, no desire to detain Seth Jamnalal Bajaj any longer than is necessary. Indeed as you will remember, they were at considerable pains to avoid detaining him in the first instance. Seth Jamnalal has been made fully aware of the conditions on which the Durbar are ready to take the desired action now in regard to him and the other prisoners, and to the best of my knowledge, the position has not altered since the departure of H. H. the Maharaja.

I have read with close attention what you say in the last paragraph of your letter and I am very grateful to you for letting me know your views. I think it is fair to say that the Political Department have given no more encouragement to 'anti-congress personalities' to use if I may, your own phrase, than to pro-congress personalities to establish contacts within rulers and their subjects.

I hope you keep well.

Yours sincerely,
Linlithgow

162. JAIPUR¹

Those who are interested in Jaipur affairs have been living in suspense for they had learnt that some talks were taking place between the Prime Minister of the State and Seth Jamnalalji. I regret to have to inform them that nothing worth has come out of the talks. Therefore, the struggle continues. Even civil disobedience continues in a way though it is suspended in regard to further formation of jathas for courting arrest. Those who courted arrest remain in the State prisons. They have not sought release. They will come out in due course on the termination of their sentences. Sethji's detention is indefinite. And he will not come out by undertaking to leave the State on release, and the authorities will not permit him to remain in Jaipur as a free man in spite of the fact that further courting of arrests has stopped. Thus they will not allow Sethji even to do constructive work among the people. They know that they have no fear of any secret propaganda on his part or his saying one thing and doing the contrary. His reputation for strictest honesty is too well established to admit of any doubt.

Some complication has arisen because Sethji is suffering from pains in the knees. The State Medical Officer advises Sethji to go to Europe or at least to the seaside for treatment. He is himself doing all he can, but he is of opinion that change of place is indicated. Sethji whilst he is under detention would not go out of Jaipur even for the sake of getting well. He thinks that self-respect requires unconditional release. He will not think of a change so long as he is under a ban for which he feels there is no justification. Since civil disobedience is suspended there is no warrant whatsoever for detaining Jamnalalji in custody. Why won't the authorities release him and arrest him when he commits an offence against the laws of the State? To say the least there is something uncanny about the treatment of Seth Jamnalalji. It is the duty of the Jaipur authorities either to justify the indefinite detention or to release him unconditionally.

¹ Gandhiji in *Harijan*, 17-7-1939.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST.

The Jaipurians have been asking me how long the embargo on their civil resistance will last. I can only answer, as long as the atmosphere demands suspension. Meanwhile let them carry out the constructive programme. I retain the opinion that no one is fit for offering civil disobedience who has not satisfied the conditions I have laid down. And there is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice. In other words, it applies only to those who are not conscious of any inner call and who have faith in my riper experience and soundness of my judgement.

Though the talks have broken down, the authorities are not absolved from the duty of finding a solution for the impasse. Absence of civil disobedience does not mean cessation of agitation in some form or other for securing the rudiments of freedom for which the fight was undertaken. Public opinion will give the authorities no rest. Let the Jaipurians, therefore, know that so long as they have the will they have the power. And it increases with every effort to keep it under check. Every power is not meant to be immediately used. Garnering it often makes it far more effective than if it is used the moment it is generated.

163. JAIPUR SATYAGRAHA¹

Jaipur Satyagraha has ended satisfactorily as announced in Seth Jamnalalji's public statement. He had had several interviews with the Maharaja Saheb. The result has been that the regulation regarding public meetings and processions has been withdrawn. So has the ban on newspapers. Amelioration in several other matters has been assured. For this happy result both the Maharaja and Seth Jamnalalji deserve to be congratulated—the Maharaja for his just-mindedness and Sethji for his wisdom and moderation in conducting the negotiations on behalf of the Jaipur Praja Mandal. It is a happy ending to a struggle which was conducted with great restraint and calmness. It is a triumph

¹ Gandhiji in *Harijan*, 23-9-1939.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

of non-violence. From the very beginning the demands were restricted to the barest minimum necessary for self-expression and political education. The goal of responsible Government has been always kept in view, but it has never been offensively or aggressively advanced as if the insistence was on an immediate grant of full responsibility. The Praja Mandal has wisely recognised its own limitations and the backward state of the people. Practically no political education has been hitherto allowed in many of the Rajputana States. It will be solid gain if civil liberty in its real sense is assured to the people of Jaipur. For this, as much will depend upon the wisdom with which it is used by the people as upon the restraint of the Jaipur authorities.

In this connection Seth Jamnalalji has raised a most important question. He insists that no European should be appointed Dewan. I have had to perform the painful duty of criticising the administration of the State by one of its English Dewans. I have no doubt that an English Dewan is any day a misfit in an Indian State. He has to serve an Indian Chief. But retired English officials from whom Dewans are chosen are not by habit used to take orders from Indian Chiefs. They cannot understand the caprices of Indian Princes and will not accommodate themselves to them. The Chiefs themselves never feel at home with English Dewans. Moreover no matter how conscientious they are, Englishmen can never understand the people of the States or have patience with them. And the people can never take the same liberty with them that they can and will with men who are drawn from among themselves. Thus an English Dewan is a double handicap in an Indian State and robs it of what little scope there is left in it for indigenous development. Add to this the fact that the appointment of English Dewans in States is a cruel encroachment upon the very narrow field left for the expression of Indian administrative talent. Supposing Dewanships had been a preserve of retired English officials, we would have missed Sir T. Madhao Rao or Sir Salar Jung, to mention only two among the well-known Dewans of Indian States.

TO A GANDHIAN CAPITALIST

It is to be hoped, therefore, that if H. H. the Maharaja has really a free choice, he will select an Indian known for his integrity, ability and sympathy for popular aspirations. It is to be hoped further that if the choice has to be made by the British Government, they will not impose a European Dewan on the Maharaja.

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